

**Faculty of Arts
University of Helsinki**

Bahrām Čūbīn in Early Arabic and Persian Historiography – Why so many stories?

Joonas Maristo

Doctoral dissertation, to be presented for public discussion with the permission of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Helsinki in, Auditorium P673, Porthania, on the 20th of May, 2020 at 12 o'clock.

Bahrām Čūbīn in Early Arabic and Persian Historiography – Why so many stories?
Joonas Maristo

University of Helsinki
Faculty of Arts
Doctoral Programme in History and Cultural Heritage

Supervisors:
Professor Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila (University of Edinburgh)
Docent Dr. Ilkka Lindstedt (University of Helsinki)

Pre-examiners:
Professor Sarah Bowen Savant (Aga Khan University)
Professor A.C.S. Peacock (University of St Andrews)

Opponent:
Professor Sarah Bowen Savant (Aga Khan University)

Custos
Professor Hannu Juusola (University of Helsinki)

The Faculty of Arts uses the Urkund system (plagiarism recognition) to examine all doctoral dissertations.

ISBN 978-951-51-6052-2 (nid.)
ISBN 978-951-51-6053-9 (PDF)

Printed in Finland by Unigrafia
Helsinki 2020

Abstract

This doctoral dissertation discusses the transmission and evolution of Bahrām Čübīn stories in early Arabic and Persian historiography in fourteen source texts. Bahrām Čübīn (d. 591) was a historical figure and general in the Sasanian army during the reigns of Hurmuzd IV (r. 579–590) and Khusraw II (r. 591–628). The original stories were written in Middle Persian probably at the end of the 6th century or at the beginning of the 7th century and then translated into Arabic in the 8th century. Both the Pahlavi versions and early Arabic translations are irretrievably lost. The extant versions are based on the Arabic translations.

The corpus includes fourteen Arabic and Persian texts: Ibn Qutayba's (d. 889) *Kitāb al-Ma'ārif*, al-Dīnawarī's (d. ca. 903) *Kitāb al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, Al-Ya'qūbī's (d. ca. 905), *Ta'rikh*, al-Ṭabarī's (d. 923) *Ta'rikh al-Rusul wa-l-Mulūk*, al-Mas'ūdī's *Murūj al-Dhahab wa-Ma'ādin al-Jawhar* (written in 956), Bal'amī's *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī* (written after 963), Al-Maqqisī's *Kitāb al-Bad' wa-l-Ta'rikh* (written 966), anonymous *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Akhbār al-Furs wa-l-'Arab* (ca. 1000–1050), Firdawsī's (d. 1020) *Šāhnāma*, al-Ṭa'ālibī's (d. 1038) *Ghurur Akhbār Mulūk al-Furs wa-Siyari-him*, Gardīzī's *Zayn al-Akhbār* (written before 1052), Ibn al-Balkhī's *Fārsnāma* (written after 1126), anonymous *Mujmal al-Tawārikh wa-l-Qiṣaṣ* (written after 1126), and Ibn al-Aṭīr's *Kitāb al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rikh* (written before 1233). These are the oldest extant Arabic and Persian texts including versions of the story of Bahrām Čübīn.

The findings of this dissertation include mapping the connections within the corpus, presenting textual evidence about the transmission, establishing probable lines of transmission and excluding others, and providing reasons for the diversity within the corpus. The study aims to answer the following questions: How are the texts linked together? What sources did the fourteen Arabic and Persian texts use? How were the stories of Bahrām Čübīn transmitted? What can explain the diversity of the versions? Why did the Bahrām Čübīn story continue to appeal to the writers? What characteristics did the stories of Bahrām Čübīn have in the beginning? I argue that the extant versions must be based on multiple early Arabic adaptations which are based on multiple Pahlavi originals. The findings of this study deepen our understanding of the transmission of the Persian cultural and literary heritage, of which Bahrām Čübīn stories form a part, in early Islamic historiography and bring forth many new connections and details within the corpus. The study provides lines of inquiry and material for further studies.

Tiivistelmä

Tämä väitöskirja käsittelee Bahrām Čübīn -tarinoiden välittymistä ja kehittymistä varhaisessa arabian- ja persiankielisessä historiankirjoituksessa neljässätoista kirjallisessa lähteessä. Bahrām Čübīn (k. 591) oli historiallinen henkilö, joka toimi sotapäällikkönä sasanidi-Persiassa (226–651 jaa.) Hormizd IV:n (579–590) ja Khosrau II:n (591–628) hallintokausilla. Tarinat kirjoitettiin todennäköisesti pian Bahrām Čübīnin kuoleman jälkeen 500-luvun lopulla tai 600-luvun alussa pahlaviksi ja käännettiin myöhemmin 700-luvulla arabiaksi. Vaikka alkuperäiset pahlaviversiot ja varhaiset arabialaiset käännökset ovat lopullisesti kadonneet, jäljellä olevat arabian- ja persiankieliset tekstit perustuvat ensimmäisiin arabialaisiin käännöksiin.

Korpus käsittää neljätoista arabian- ja persiankielistä tekstiä: Ibn Qutayban (d. 889) *Kitāb al-Maʿārif*, al-Dīnawarīn (k. n. 903) *Kitāb al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl*, Al-Yaʿqūbīn (k. n. 905), *Taʾrīkh*, al-Ṭabarīn (k. 923) *Taʾrīkh al-Rusul wa-l-Mulūk*, al-Masʿūdīn *Murūj al-Dḥaḥab wa-Maʿādin al-Jawhar* (kirjoitettu 956), Balʿamīn *Tārīkhnāma-yi Ṭabarī* (kirjoitettu vuoden 963 jälkeen), al-Maqdisīn *Kitāb al-Badʿ wa-l-Taʾrīkh* (kirjoitettu 966), anonymi *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Akḥbār al-Furs wa-l-ʿArab* (kirjoitettu n. 1000–1050), Firdawsīn (k. 1020) *Šāhnāma*, al-Ṭaʿālibīn (k. 1038) *Ghurur Akḥbār Mulūk al-Furs wa-Siyarīhim*, Gardīzīn *Zayn al-Akḥbār* (kirjoitettu ennen vuotta 1052), Ibn al-Balkhīn *Fārsnāma* (kirjoitettu vuoden 1126 jälkeen), anonymi *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh wa-l-Qiṣaṣ* (kirjoitettu vuoden 1126 jälkeen), and Ibn al-Aṭīrīn *Kitāb al-Kāmil fī al-Taʾrīkh* (kirjoitettu ennen vuotta 1233). Tekstit ovat varhaisimmat säilyneet arabian- ja persiankieliset tekstit, jotka pitävät sisällään Bahrām Čübīn-tarinan versioita.

Väitöskirjan tutkimustulokset auttavat ymmärtämään, miten korpuksen tekstit liittyvät toisiinsa ja miten tarinat ovat välittyneet. Tutkimus pyrkii vastaamaan seuraaviin kysymyksiin: Miten tekstit liittyvät toisiinsa? Mihin lähteisiin neljätoista tekstiä perustuvat? Miten Bahrām Čübīn -t tarinat ovat välittyneet? Mikä selittää versioiden moninaisuutta? Mikä teki Bahrām Čübīn -tarinoista kiinnostavia satoja vuosia henkilön kuoleman jälkeen? Mitä sisällöllisiä elementtejä tarinan ensimmäiset versiot sisälsivät?

Väitän, että säilyneet tekstit pohjautuvat moniin arabiankielisiin versioihin, jotka puolestaan perustuvat moniin eri pahlavinkielisiin alkuperäisteksteihin. Löydökset syventävät tietämystämme persialaisen kulttuurihistorian ja kirjallisuuden välittymisestä varhaiseen islamilaiseen historiankirjoitukseen. Tutkimus tarjoaa uusia lähestymistapoja ja materiaalia tulevalle tutkimukselle.

Contents

Acknowledgments.....	2
Transliteration.....	5
Abbreviations.....	6
Part I – Context and sources.....	7
Introduction.....	8
1.1. The historical Bahrām Čübīn.....	8
1.2. Middle Persian literature and its transmission to the Islamic period.....	11
1.2.1. Translators and translations from Middle Persian to Arabic.....	12
1.2.2. How mediaeval translators (authors) worked.....	15
1.2.3. Khwadāynāmag.....	16
1.2.4. Orality-literacy continuum.....	16
1.3. Arabic and Persian Historiography.....	18
Introduction.....	18
1.3.1. Arabic historiography.....	19
1.3.2. Persian historiography.....	21
1.3.3. Historical thinking and schemes of mediaeval Arabic and Persian historiography.....	22
1.3.4. Bahrām Čübīn in scholarship.....	24
1.4. Iranian national history and the Persian context.....	26
1.4.1. Šu‘ūbīs and šu‘ūbiyya ‘movement’.....	26
1.4.2. Iranian origins of the authors.....	28
1.4.3. Dynastic policies and pre-Islamic Iranian history.....	28
1.4.4. Genealogies and Persians as part of Islamic history.....	30
1.5. General presentation of the corpus.....	32
1.6. Individual texts of the corpus.....	35
1.6.1. Ibn Qutayba’s (828–889) <i>Kitāb al-Ma‘ārif</i>	36
1.6.2. Al-Dīnawarī’s (d. ca. 903) <i>Kitāb al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl</i>	38
1.6.3. Al-Ya‘qūbī’s (d. ca. 905) <i>Ta’rīkh</i>	40
1.6.4. Al-Ṭabarī’s (d. 923) <i>Ta’rīkh</i>	42
1.6.5. Al-Mas‘ūdī’s <i>Murūj al-Dhahab wa-Ma‘ādin al-Jawhar</i> (written in 956).....	44
1.6.6. Bal‘amī’s <i>Tārīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī</i> (written after 963).....	46
1.6.7. Al-Maqdisī’s <i>Kitāb al-Bad’ wa-l-Ta’rīkh</i> (written in 966).....	49
1.6.8. Firdawsī’s (ca. 940–1020) <i>Šāhnāma</i>	52
1.6.9. Al-Ṭa‘ālibī’s (d. 1038) <i>Ghurur Akhbār Mulūk al-Furs wa-Siyari-him</i>	55
1.6.10. <i>Nihāyat al-Arab fī Akhbār al-Furs wa-l-‘Arab</i> (anonymous, written ca. 1000–1050).....	57

1.6.11. Gardīzī's <i>Zayn al-Akhbār</i> (written before 1052)	61
1.6.12. Ibn al-Balkhī's <i>Fārsnāma</i> (written in 1116)	62
1.6.13. <i>Mujmal al-Tawārīkh wa-l-Qiṣaṣ</i> (anonymous, written in 1126)	64
1.6.14. Ibn al-Aṭīr's <i>Kitāb al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rikh</i> (written before 1233)	66
1.7. Possible literary sources for the Bahrām Čübīn story	69
Part II – Method and Narrative Motifs	73
2.1. Methodological observations	74
2.2. The method and research questions	75
2.3. Narrative motifs in the Bahrām Čübīn story	77
Narrative block I: Introducing Bahrām Čübīn	78
Narrative block II: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khāqān II	78
Narrative block III: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khāqān III	78
Narrative block IV: Revolt of Bahrām Čübīn	79
Narrative block V: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khusraw II	79
Narrative block VI: Bahrām Čübīn's defeat and death	80
Narrative block VII: After the death of Bahrām Čübīn	80
2.4. Individuals in the Bahrām Čübīn story	81
2.5. What information can the narrative motifs provide us?	82
Part III – Textual analysis of the Bahrām Čübīn stories	86
Introduction	87
3.1. Introducing Bahrām Čübīn	87
3.1.1. External forces threaten Hurmuzd IV's kingdom	87
3.1.2. Mihrān-Sitād telling the story of Hurmuzd IV's mother	92
3.1.3. Astrologer's prophecy and description of Bahrām Čübīn	93
3.1.4. Identifying Bahrām Čübīn and his origins	95
3.1.5. Bahrām Čübīn chooses 12,000 quadragenarian men for his army	97
3.1.6. Presenting arguments to Hurmuzd IV	101
3.2. Revolt of Bahrām Čübīn and the preceding events – fighting Khāqān II and Khāqān III	105
3.2.1. Khāqān II	105
3.2.2. Composition of the armies of Bahrām and Khāqān II	107
3.2.3. Khāqān III	109
3.2.4. Stealing from the spoils	111
3.2.4.1. Al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya' qūbī and al-Ṭabarī	112
3.2.4.2. Bal'amī	112
3.2.4.3. Firdawsī	114

3.2.4.4. <i>Nihāyat</i> , al-Ta‘ālibī, and Gardīzī	114
3.2.4.5. Legendary Turanian kings and the spoils	115
3.2.5. Hurmuzd IV’s vizier’s role	116
3.2.6. Hurmuzd IV’s vizier’s denouncing sentence	118
3.2.7. Exchanging insulting gifts and Hurmuzd IV’s letter to Bahrām Čübīn	121
3.2.8. Bahrām’s reluctance to revolt and the army’s reactions	125
3.2.9. Other motives for the revolt	127
3.2.10. Hurmuzd IV sends his vizier to Bahrām to apologize	130
3.2.11. Blinding, dethroning and killing of Hurmuzd IV	133
3.3. Bahrām Čübīn fights Khusraw II	135
3.3.1. The Arabs help Khusraw II on his way to Byzantium	135
3.3.2. Khusraw II shoots an arrow and hits Bahrām Čübīn’s horse	137
3.3.3. Bahrām Čübīn rides a piebald (<i>ablaq</i>) horse	139
3.4. Death of Bahrām Čübīn	141
3.4.1. Bahrām fights and kills Khāqān IV’s brother	141
3.4.2. Bahrām fights a monster and rescues Khātūn II’s daughter	142
3.4.3. Khusraw II sends a man to intrigue against Bahrām	144
3.4.4. The assassination of Bahrām Čübīn	145
3.4.4.1. Events leading to the assassination	146
3.4.4.2. Bahrām’s last words	146
3.4.5. Gurdiya kills Khāqān IV’s second brother	147
3.4.6. Destiny of Bisṭām and Bindūy and anti-Sasanian passages	149
3.5. Legitimacy of royal power – How Bahrām’s desire for the kingship is depicted	155
3.5.1. Bahrām Čübīn deems Khusraw II a better ruler than Hurmuzd IV	156
3.5.2. Bahrām’s scurrilous behaviour with Khusraw II before the fight	157
3.5.3. Bahrām ascends the throne	160
3.5.4. Letter of Bahrām Čübīn to Khusraw II	161
3.5.5. Khusraw II’s miraculous escape	162
3.5.6. Bahrām and his troops halt at the house of an old woman	163
3.5.7. Qārin al-Jabalī al-Nihāwandī and Bahrām in the land of Qūmis	164
3.5.8. Gurdiya questioning Bahrām’s right to power	165
3.5.9. Bahrām Čübīn goes hunting wild ass	168
3.6. Attitudes towards Bahrām Čübīn manifested in the texts	171
Part IV – Comparisons and conclusions	174
4.1. Hypothetical sources and connections	175

4.2. Narrative motifs and connections between texts	175
4.3. Al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, and al-Mas‘ūdī.....	176
4.3.1. Distinctive characters of the texts	177
4.3.1.1. Al-Dīnawarī (d. ca. 903).....	178
4.3.1.2. Al-Ya‘qūbī (d. ca. 905)	179
4.3.1.3. Al-Ṭabarī (d. 923)	180
4.3.1.4. Al-Mas‘ūdī (written in 956)	180
4.3.2. al-Dīnawarī and al-Ya‘qūbī	181
4.3.3. Al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī	183
4.3.4. Al-Dīnawarī and al-Mas‘ūdī.....	185
4.3.5. Al-Ya‘qūbī and al-Ṭabarī	186
4.3.6. Al-Ya‘qūbī and al-Mas‘ūdī	188
4.3.7. Al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas‘ūdī	189
4.3.8. Conclusions	190
4.4. The Bal‘amī-Firdawsī- <i>Nihāyat</i> trio	194
4.5. Bal‘amī and <i>Nihāyat</i>	200
4.6. Al-Dīnawarī and <i>Nihāyat</i>	202
4.7. <i>Nihāyat</i> ’s structure and uncertain dating	203
4.8. Firdawsī’s links to al-Ṭa‘ālibī	205
4.9. Firdawsī and other texts	206
4.10. Al-Ṭabarī and Bal‘amī	208
4.11. Al-Maqdisī’s two sources (Ibn Qutayba and al-Mas‘ūdī)	210
4.12. Al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Balkhī	210
4.13. Other connections.....	210
4.14. The map of connections.....	211
4.15. Conclusions	213
4.15.1. Why the Bahrām Čübīn story continued to appeal to the writers	214
4.15.2. Final conclusions	215
Appendices	223
A. Narrative motifs.....	223
Narrative block I: Introducing Bahrām Čübīn	223
Narrative block II: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khāqān II	223
Narrative block III: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khāqān III	224
Narrative block IV: Revolt of Bahrām Čübīn	225
Narrative block V: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khusraw II.....	227

Narrative block VI: Bahrām Čübīn's defeat and death	229
Narrative block VII: After the death of Bahrām Čübīn.....	231
B. General index of nomenclature	234
Chart of personal names in the stories of Bahrām Čübīn.....	234
Chart of place names within the story of Bahrām Čübīn.....	259
C. Events before the assassination of Bahrām Čübīn in Firdawsī's account.....	270
D. Biṣṭām and Bindūy in the corpus	271
Bibliography	272
Primary sources.....	272
Secondary sources	274

Be aware that in these chronicles (*ta' rīkh-hā*) there are many traditions (*riwāyāt*) and that every group and sect has composed its own version (*maqālatī*). No one has resolved these contradictions, and for no one has the truth become evident. God knows best the details in this matter.

Anonymous (1126), *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh wa-l-Qiṣaṣ*.

Acknowledgments

Writing a doctoral dissertation is a long journey in time, learning and scholarly life. For the past four or five years I have been travelling with this work. More accurately, the work has been constantly following me both as physical notes, articles or books and in the form of ideas, thoughts and questions of which some have flourished into written words and phrases in the final text. As often in long travels, the travel companion manifests many qualities: sometimes inspiring and joyful, at times tedious and irritating.

The writing itself is solitary work but the writing process involves many others, colleagues, friends and teachers as well as discussion with texts – research literature and original texts – whose writers are sometimes alive, often deceased and sometimes unknown and deceased. In this sense, studying historiography of the past is no less than travelling in time – an alternative but fit expression for constructing and reconstructing the past.

First of all, I would like to point out the importance of adequate intellectual circumstances, of which a well-equipped and rich library forms a crucial part. I am indebted to the Library of the University of Helsinki and consequently to all the previous professors, scholars and students in Arabic and Islamic studies, of whom some are my colleagues, friends and teachers and others scholars of previous generations, who all have contributed to the selection of available scholarly books. Without these massive resources – very few books have I had to order from other libraries – the work would have been much longer and more laborious.

This dissertation has received financial support from several sources without which I could not have accomplished the work. I received a three-year grant from the Finnish Cultural Foundation and smaller grants from the Finnish Institute in the Middle East and the University of Helsinki. The three-year grant especially secured me the peace of mind and concentration required for such a long and challenging work.

I want to express my gratitude to Professor Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila (University of Edinburgh) who, before leaving for Edinburgh in June 2016, supervised my work. His enthusiasm and tirelessness in scholarly endeavours in the widest sense of the word has set an example to follow. He is my teacher and his work has influenced my scholarly interests in many ways. I believe that his recommendation had a great positive influence on grant applications and consequently on the completion of the dissertation.

I want to thank Lic. Phil. Kaj Öhrnberg (University of Helsinki) who read many early drafts of the dissertation with patience and whose recommendations on scholarly literature and advice on academic writing improved the work greatly.

I want to express my gratitude to Docent Dr. Ilkka Lindstedt who supervised my work after Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila. As a member of the small circle of scholars of Islamic historiography and of the same generation, I consider him as a peer and colleague even though his academic career sparked off years before I even started my dissertation. He has always been helpful, whether in sharing material, lending books or commenting texts.

My pre-reviewers, Professor Sarah Bowen Savant (Aga Khan University) and Professor A.C.S. Peacock (University of St Andrews), gave me extremely valuable feedback on my work. My heartfelt thanks for their time, sharp scholarly insight and comments.

I am grateful to Safura Borumand, assistant professor in the Institute of Humanities and Cultural Studies in Teheran, who granted me access to the institute's library and assisted me in finding rare books which are not available in European libraries.

Mikko Viitamäki and I share a common interest in Persian poetry, mysticism and languages. I want to thank him for helping me with the translation of some difficult passages in Persian as well as for many spontaneous discussions over the years.

I am grateful to other students and young scholars, such as Philip Bockholt, Ionuț Cucu, Tommi Kakko, Tuukka Kauhanen and Pegah Shahbaz, with whom I have had a chance to meet and discuss research-related topics which was often a pleasurable and helpful experience.

I also want to thank Anna-Liisa Rafael, a PhD student fellow, with whom I wrote one academic article and had many enjoyable discussions about varied research topics as well as sharing the hardships graduate students have to endure.

Achieving a goal is a combination of hard work and recovery or recreational activities. I am grateful to Heikki Haavikko, who, in addition to open-mindedly supporting my non-academic literary activities, introduced me to some septentrional hibernal sports which have brought me joy and effectively counterbalanced the physically static work of writing.

I am grateful to Barry Carpenter who, over twenty years ago, kindled a fire for seeking knowledge which is yet to be extinguished. This dissertation is a sequel to that curiosity.

As a PhD student, one is part of the academic community. At the University of Helsinki, I have been lucky to discuss, share work space, drink coffee and to eat lunch with the following wonderful people: Sylvia Akar, Lotta Aunio, Patricia Berg, Melike Çakan, Thera Crane, Axel Fleix, Jouni

Harjumäki, Jaakko Helke, Liban Hersi, Hannu Juusola, Timo Kaartinen, Don Kilian, Antti Laine, Hanna Mannila, Risto Marjomaa, Janne Mattila, Teemu Naarajärvi, Inka Nokso-Koivisto, Simona Olivieri, Maria Pakkala, Miika Pölkki, Janne Saarikivi, Saana Santalahti, Stephan Schulz, Mulki al-Sharmani, Laeticia Söderman-De la Torre, Saana Svärd, Riikka Tuori and Xenia Zeiler.

I am also grateful to Heli Maristo and Marko Pylvänäinen who helped with the figures which gave a final touch to the layout of the text. Last but not least I want to thank Robert Whiting who, by meticulously reading through the text, made great efforts to improve my English and saved me from many embarrassing mistakes. All the errors, however, are solely mine.

On a personal note, I want to thank my family for supporting me in many ways. I also want to express my gratitude to my dear companion Elina Kirvesniemi who has always encouraged me and whose all-around positive air has had a great effect on me whenever I have been totally immersed in writing.

Transliteration

To avoid confusion and overlapping, I have opted for one transliteration scheme for both Arabic and Persian. This usage especially affects transliteration of Persian words. Therefore, the short vowels such as *e* and *o* are transliterated as *i* and *u*. The word *bozorg* becomes *buzurg* and *pesar* becomes *pisar* etc.

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Abbreviations

AT = Ibn al-Aṭṭār 1987. *Al-Kāmil fī al-Ta' rīkh* I. Ed. Abū al-Fidā 'Abdallāh al-Qāḍī. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.

BKh = Ibn al-Balkhī, 1921. *Fārsnāma*. Ed. G. Le Strange & R.A. Nicholson. Gibb Memorial Publications, New Series 1. London & Luzac: E.J.W.

BL = Bal'amī, 1392 (= 2013). *Tārīkhnāma-yi Ṭabarī* I-V. Ed. Muḥammad Rawšan. 5th edition. Tehran: Čāpkhāna-yi intišār-i surūš.

DN = Al-Dīnawarī, Abū Ḥanīfa 1888. *Kitāb al-Akhhbār al-Ṭiwāl*. Ed. Vladimir Guirgass. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

EI = *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, second edition.

FD = Firdawsī, 1987–2008, *Shāhnāma* I-VIII. Ed. Jalāl Khalighī-Muṭlagh Abū al-Faḍl Khaṭībī. Persian Text Series, New Series 1. New York: Bibliotheca Persica.

GD = Gardīzī, 1384 (= 2005). *Zayn al-Akhhbār*. Ed. Raḥīm Reḡāzāda Malik. Silsila-yi intišārāt-i anjuman-i āṭār wa-mafākhir-i farhangī 346. Tehran: Anjuman-i āṭār wa mafāxir-i farhangī.

K. = *Kitāb*. Book in Arabic.

MJ = Anonymous, 1379 (= 2000). *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh wa-l-Qiṣaṣ*. Ed. Malik al-Šu'arā' Bahār. Tehran: Intiṣārāt-i Asāṭīr.

MQ = Al-Maqdisī al-Muṭahhar b. Ṭāhir, 1899–1916. *Kitāb al-Bad' wa-l-Ta' rīkh* I-V. Ed. & tr. Clément Huart. Paris: Éditions Ernest Laroux.

MS = Al-Mas'ūdī 1966. *Murūj al-Dhahab* I-II. Ed. Barbier de Meynard, Pavet de Courteille, Charles Pellat. Beirut: Publications de l'Université Libanaise.

NH = Anonymous, 1375 (= 1996). *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Akhhbār al-Furs wa-al-'Arab*. Ed. Muḥammad Taqī Dānišpažūh. Tehran: Anjuman-i āṭār wa mafākhir-i farhangī.

QT = Ibn Qutayba, 1960. *Kitāb al-Ma'ārif*. Ed. 'Ukāša Ṭarwat, 1960. Cairo: Dār al-ma'ārif bi-Miṣr.

SLAEI = Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam

ṬB = Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr 1879–1901. *Ta' rīkh al-Rusul wa-l-Mulūk* I-XV. Ed. M.J. de Goeje et al. as *Annales*. Leiden: Brill.

ṬB = al-Ṭa'ālibī, 1900. *Histoire des rois des Perses par Aboû Mansoûr Abd al-Malik ibn Mohammad ibn Ismā'il al-Tha'ālibī*. Ed. & tr. Zotenberg H. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.

YQ = Al-Ya'qūbī 1883. *Ta' rīkh al-Ya' qūbī*. Ed. M. Th. Houtsma. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

Part I – Context and sources

Introduction

Bahrām Čübīn is a fascinating figure in Arabic and Persian historiography because he is dealt with in so many different ways depending on the author, his sources, and sometimes, his affiliations and the historical context. Comparing different versions of Bahrām Čübīn stories provides us with a cross-section of predominant styles, influences and contexts in mediaeval Arabic and Persian historiography.

In the first part of the study, I present the context and the corpus. The aim of this study is historiographical scrutiny and comparative analysis in the sense that links within the corpus play a pivotal role. The method and research questions are discussed in section 2.2.

The historicity of the accounts, meaning whether or not the incidents described in the texts occurred in reality, has no importance for the present study. Bahrām Čübīn, however, was a historical figure. Therefore, it is necessary to give an idea of who he was and what he did. Then, I shall present characteristics and genres of Middle Persian literature, discuss Islamic historiography, relevant scholarship, and, finally, introduce the fourteen texts that form the corpus. All the translations from Arabic and Persian are mine.

1.1. The historical Bahrām Čübīn

The Persian general Bahrām Čübīn (d. 591) was active during the reigns of Hurmuzd IV (r. 579–590) and Khusraw II (r. 591–628). The earliest written sources on Bahrām Čübīn are the Greek historian Theophylact Simocatta and Sebeos, who wrote in Armenian. Theophylact Simocatta wrote his *History* around 630 (Whitby, 1986: xvi), some forty years after Bahrām's death. The text includes about sixty pages on Bahrām Čübīn and related events (Simocatta, 1986: 80–85, 100–153). Simocatta also provides some dates for important events, although we should be cautious with them. Sebeos wrote his history in the mid-seventh century, sixty to seventy years after Bahrām's death. His history includes about ten pages on Bahrām Čübīn and related events (Sebeos, 2000: 14–23).

Bahrām Čübīn is sometimes associated with the house of Mihrān or Mihr, referring to a family of Parthian origin from the city of Ray. For instance, Pourshariati has vigorously promoted this idea (2008: 101–4). Based on the notion, it is possible that the first mention of Bahrām Čübīn's family – not Bahrām Čübīn himself – is found in Šāpūr's Ka'ba-yi Zardušt inscription in the late 6th century, which mentions “Arštāt, Mihrān from Ray” (Henning, 1952: 510). If the assumption is true, Ka'ba-yi Zardušt bears the first inscriptive mention of Bahrām's family. Arabic and classical Persian sources,

however, do not corroborate the references to Mihrān and the association with Mihrān is based on only three sources: the above mentioned Middle Persian inscription; Sebeos, who calls him “merhewandak”, a worshipper of Mihr or Mitra, an old Indo-Iranian god (Sebeos, 2000: 15, 20); and Simocatta, who associates him with the house of Mirrames (Simocatta, 1986: 101), possibly a corrupted form of Mihr or Mihrān. If Bahrām Čübīn really belonged to the old noble family of Mihrān, his family probably had a powerful position within the Sasanian dynasty like other great families of Parthian descent such as Kārin, Sūrēn, Wārāz (Sárközy, 2015: 286; Pourshariati, 2017). There is also numismatic evidence of Bahrām Čübīn (Göbl, 1971: 52 & 1983: 329; Sellwood, 1985: 148–9; Daryaee, 2015: 195–202) which does not clarify his identity more than we know from written sources.

According to the above sources, one can sketch a brief chronology of Bahrām Čübīn's life: Bahrām Čübīn was a son of Bahrām Gušnasp and probably a member of the Mihrān family. He was a general from Ray and a usurper in Hurmuzd IV's army in the late 6th century. His family was related to the Arsacids, a dynasty preceding the Sasanians. According to Simocatta, he commanded the cavalry force which captured Dārā in 572 under Hurmuzd IV's rule (Simocatta, 1986: 101). He became a satrap of Azerbaijan and Armenia, a detail which is confirmed by many Arabic and classical Persian sources (e.g. DN: 82, BL II: 763, TB: 643, NH: 352). Then, he fought a long but indecisive war against the Byzantines in northern Mesopotamia after which Hurmuzd IV appointed him to fight the Turks or the Turanians. He wins a resounding victory (Shahbazi, 1989 b) and kills the enemy king in 588 or 589 but it is uncertain whether the king was a ruler of the western Turks or Hephthalites (Frye, 1983: 163). Then, for unclear reasons, Bahrām revolts and topples Hurmuzd IV. According to Simocatta, Hurmuzd IV's deposition occurred on the 6th of February 590 (1986: 239). Hurmuzd IV's son, Khusraw II, ascended the throne on the 15th of February and was confronted by Bahrām Čübīn's forces on the 20th of the same month (ibid.). Khusraw II was forced to retreat and fled to Azerbaijan. Then, Bahrām Čübīn crowns himself on the 9th of March (ibid.) and serves as king for a period of time, an exceptional feat for someone not of Sasanian royal blood. In the spring and summer of 590, Khusraw II appealed to Maurice, king of Byzantium, who provides troops and helps Khusraw II. Bahrām tried to appeal to Maurice and offered land concessions in exchange for non-loyalty to Khusraw II (Simocatta, 1986: 124). For the second time, Bahrām Čübīn confronts Khusraw II's troops and in late summer 591 the former is outmanoeuvred and defeated. Khusraw II regains the royal

power and the kingship. Consequently, Bahrām flees to the land of the Turks¹ or Turanians where he is assassinated in 591 probably with the help of Khusraw II.²

Bahrām lived in restless times towards the end of the Sasanian rule, his revolt was one of the three uprisings levelled against the Sasanian dynasty before its end in 652. Bindūy and Biṣṭām, brothers-in-law of the ruler, revolted in 590 almost concomitantly with the revolt of Bahrām Čübīn which led to Hurmuzd IV's deposition (Shahbazi, 1989 a). Biṣṭām's resistance continued after Bahrām's death and he defied Khusraw II for nearly a decade with the help of Bahrām Čübīn's former partisans (Frye, 1983: 166). Of the Arabic and classical Persian texts, only al-Dīnawarī refers to Biṣṭām's revolt. Some thirty years later, General Šahrbarāz seized the royal power from Ardašīr III, grandson of Khusraw II (Shahbazi, 1986). Even before, the Sasanian Empire had already been weakened by Mazdak's revolt under the reign of Kawād I (Rubin, 2004: 251). This historical background is essential to note, since it probably affected the way that Bahrām was portrayed in the texts that are preserved to us: many Middle Persian original(s) of the Bahrām Čübīn story most probably had a strong legitimist and pro-royalist tenor, rejecting Bahrām's legitimacy to power (Czeglédy, 1958: 32–43; Rubin, 2004: 254–72).³ Traces of this tendency are manifested in the Arabic and Persian texts too, and, generally speaking, they treat Bahrām's aspirations to power negatively. This topic is dealt with below in section 3.6.

¹ The usual connotation of the Turk or Turks in modern times is the land and people of Anatolia, westwards from modern Iran. However, the Turks mentioned in *Šāhnāma* and other texts of the corpus refer to Turan and Turanians. Turan is both an ethnic and a geographic term and the term Turanian refers to people living in the northeast of Iran beyond the river Oxus or Jayhūn in Arabic and Persian texts. In *Šāhnāma*, Turan is opposed to Iran and wars and conflicts between the two regions are a recurrent theme. In Persian mythology Tūr refers to one of Farīdūn's three sons – Salm, Tūr and Īraj – among whom Farīdūn divided the world. The Byzantine territories (*rūm*) or Anatolia was given to Salm, Turan to Tūr and Iran to Īraj (Davis, 2000). In Firdawsī's account of Bahrām Čübīn, the term China (*čīn*) is interchangeable with Turk or Turks. For instance, he refers to Khāqān II as king of China (*sālār-i čīn*) (see 3.2.1). Taking into account the literary context of the Bahrām Čübīn story and to avoid confusion, it is better to use the terms Turan and Turanians instead of Turk and Turks in this study.

² Firdawsī provides us with two dates without a specific year in the story of Bahrām Čübīn. The first is associated with the events after Bahrām's rebellion when he marches from Balkh back to Ray and mints coins in the name of Khusraw II. The text reads "6th of the month of Day (*biḥ khurdād-i farkhanda dar mäh-i day*)" which equals the 27th of December (FD VII: 609). The second date, the 11th of the month Ādhar (*biḥ ādhar-mah bud wa-rūz-i hūr*), occurs in the letter which Bahrām sends to the nobles of the Persian kingdom to declare that he has assumed the royal functions (FD VIII: 67). This date equals the 2nd of December if we accept the emendation of "*hūr*" to "*khūr*". Both of the words mean sun but only "*khūr*" regularly has the meaning of the 11th of the month. Firdawsī does not suggest any years but in light of the chronology presented above, it would be natural to suggest that the 27th of December refers to the year 589 and the 2nd of December of the following year 590. However, the years do not tally with the chronology presented by Simocatta and a gap of nearly a year between Bahrām's revolt and his ascension to the throne seems unreasonably long given that he was in power more or less a year. Therefore, it is safer to consider Firdawsī's dates as literary devices rather than references to historical events.

³ Although in the conclusions I will suggest that there were many Pahlavi originals and some of them did not have a pro-royalist and pro-Sasanian tenor (see 4.15).

1.2. Middle Persian literature and its transmission to the Islamic period

Probably shortly after his death, Bahrām Čūbīn's adventures were written in Pahlavi Romance(s) at the end of the 6th century or at the beginning of the 7th century. These version(s) passed into Arabic translations somewhere in the early part of the 8th century. In this section, I will give a very brief presentation of the Middle Persian or Pahlavi literature concerned. This will serve as a necessary context for the emergence of Bahrām Čūbīn stories in Islamic literature.

Middle Persian or Pahlavi is commonly defined as a language used in Iran from the third century BCE to the adoption of Arabic script in the eighth and ninth centuries CE, roughly one thousand years (Zakeri, 2004: 1199). The language is written in an Aramaic-derived script and associated with Zoroastrianism because most of the surviving literature consists of religious texts (de Menasce, 1983). After the Middle Persian script was replaced by the Arabic script, Middle Persian texts continued to be copied in the old script for many centuries in religious Zoroastrian families: most of the surviving Middle Persian texts are known to have been written between the 9th and 17th centuries (Cereti, 2009). Although almost nothing has survived of the Middle Persian literature directly from the Sasanian era (224–652), these later-copied texts are commonly thought to contain part of the literary heritage of the late Sasanian period (ibid.). Fortunately, we have enough Syriac and Arabic recensions, adaptations and translations to form a picture of a rich literary tradition. According to Macuch (2009), the Middle Persian literature can be divided into eight categories:

- 1) Religious texts including Middle Persian translations and commentaries of the Avesta and other Zoroastrian texts
- 2) Eschatological, apocalyptic and visionary literature
- 3) *Andarz* or wisdom literature and other didactic texts
- 4) Epic history and geographical works
- 5) Political treatises
- 6) Texts on natural science and medicine
- 7) Works on jurisprudence
- 8) Imaginative literature and poetry

The vast majority of Middle Persian texts, preserved or not, belong to the first category. The writings of the *Khwadāynāmag*-tradition (see 1.2.3), the tradition of the kings, and the romance on Bahrām Čūbīn belong to the fourth category of epic history and geographical works, which concerns us here. Both the original Pahlavi versions of the *Khwadāynāmag*-tradition and the story of Bahrām

Čübīn are lost and preserved only in later Arabic recensions mostly in fragments. Other books and shorter texts in this category include *Ayādgār ī Zarērān*, *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr*, *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr*, *Wizārišn ī čatrang ud nihišn ī nēw-Ardašīr*, *Husraw ud rēdag-ē* and *Dēnkard*, *Budahišn*, *Ayādgār ī Jāmaspīg*, and *Zand ī Wahman Yasn* that occasionally contain historical information (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 9–14). Most of these texts are preserved in later Arabic versions only in fragments but some others such as *Wizārišn ī čatrang*, *Ayādgār ī Zarērān* and *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr* have survived in Middle Persian manuscripts and have been rendered into modern editions (Cereti, 2009; Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 11–12). Eschatological and apocalyptic literature play a supplementary role in the analysis. The three known eschatological texts – *Ardā Wirāz-nāmag*, *Zand ī Wahman Yasn* and *Jāmāsp-nāmag* – contain references to Bahrām Čübīn according to Czeplédy (1958; see 1.3.4, 3.1.1). The other categories have no relevance in this study.

1.2.1. Translators and translations from Middle Persian to Arabic

The Arabic translation movement started from the mid-eighth century, at the end of the Umayyad period (661–750), continued until the eleventh century, and flourished considerably under the Abbasid rule (750–1258) (Bosworth, 1983). Geographically, Baghdad was the centre where many translations were made.⁴ Through the translations, the Islamic civilization assimilated into itself a wealth of scientific, cultural and societal knowledge. One can distinguish four major categories in these translations: 1) religious texts, 2) scientific texts, 3) historical texts, 4) literary texts (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 51). The majority of the texts were translated from Greek but also from Middle Persian and Syriac. As the corpus of translated texts was enormous, naturally the motives for translating varied considerably. One aspect that probably favoured translations from Middle Persian was the fact that the early Abbasids valued many aspects of the Sasanian model of kingship and employed Persian courtiers who transmitted information of pre-Islamic history and models of ruling the state (Savant, 2017: xiv–xv).

Ibn al-Nadīm's (932–990) *Fihrist* is our best source for the translators from Middle Persian to Arabic, although sometimes there is confusion about whether or not the names Ibn al-Nadīm indicates refer to translators/transmitters or authors (Zakeri, 1994: 77; Schoeler, 2006: 37; Lindstedt, 2014: 306–7).⁵ In addition to *Fihrist*, there are sporadically listed names in other sources

⁴ For more on the translation movement, see Gutas (1998) and especially the chapter 'The background of the translation movement – Material, human and cultural resources' (pp. 11–27).

⁵ One example is the list of the books on 'exhortatory talks, rules of conduct and wise sayings (*fī al-mawā'iz wa-l-ādāb wa-l-ḥikam*) of the Persians, Greeks, Indians and Arabs whose authors are known and unknown' (al-Nadīm, 1872: 315–6). Ibn

too. Most of the translators are barely known and biographical information is scarce, if not completely absent. The early translators of the Umayyad period include Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. 756), perhaps the best known of the translators from Middle Persian to Arabic who was known by the name Rūzbih son of Dād-Jušnasp in the early part of his career. Translations of books such as *Kalīla wa-Dimna*,⁶ *Khudāy-Nāma* (i.e. *Khwadāynāmag*) and numerous others are attributed to him (al-Nadīm, 1872: 118, 305; Zakeri, 2004: 1201–2; Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 89–99). Also included are Jabala b. Sālim who, according to Hoyland (2018: 15), served in the administration of the caliph Hisham (r. 724–42) and, according to Ibn al-Nadīm, translated the books *K. Bahrām Šūbīn* (i.e. Čūbīn)⁷ and *K. Šahrizād ma'a Abarwiz* (al-Nadīm, 1872: 305); Abān b. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Lāḥiq b. 'Ufayr b. al-Raqqāšī who was a poet and to whom the translations (*min mā naqala*) of six books including *Kalīla wa-Dimna*,⁸ *Sīrat Ardašīr*, *Sīrat Anūšīrwān*, *K. Bilawhar wa-Burdāniya*, *K. Rasā'il* and *K. Ḥilm al-Hind* are assigned (al-Nadīm, 1872: 119).⁹

Another important category is the translators of *Khwadāynāmag* (1.2.3). There are six sources that give more or less similar lists of the translators of the book.¹⁰ Hämeen-Anttila discusses these translators in detail and gives the following names: Muḥammad b. al-Jahm al-Barmakī, Zādūya b. Šāhūya al-Iṣbahānī, Bahrām b. Mihrān b. Miṭyār al-Iṣbahānī, Hišām b. Qāsim al-Iṣbahānī, Bahrām b. Mardānšāh Mawbad Kūrat Šābūr, Iṣḥāq b. Yazīd, Bahrām al-Harawī al-Majsi, 'Umar Kisrā (Mūbad al-Mutawakkilī), Mūsā b. 'Isā al-Kisrawī (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 59–99). Important for our study, although indirectly, is that in *Ta'riḫ Sinī al-Mulūk* (one of the sources where the list of translators is found) Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī discusses the significant differences between these translators and their compositions, giving an impression of rich but fluctuant literary activity (Hoyland, 2018: 13–14;

al-Nadīm does not specify whether the authors are translators as well. Same confusion remains regarding book titles, which, compared to other known Arabic translations from Middle Persian, could be translations.

⁶ *Kalīla wa-Dimna* is a very popular book which was originally based on the Sanskrit *Panchatantra* but transmitted through Middle Persian to Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa' and later translated back into classical Persian (Brockelmann, 1997: 503–4).

⁷ In the edition, the name is erroneously printed شوس instead of شوبين.

⁸ In addition to Ibn al-Muqaffa', Abān al-Raqqāšī is said to have translated (*naqala*) or transmitted the *Kalīla wa-Dimna*. In Arabic, the verb *naqala* can mean both 'to translate' and 'to transmit'.

⁹ Zakeri discusses other translators too (2004: 1200–2), namely Zādā Farrūkh (2004: 1200); Šāliḥ b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān (al-Nadīm, 1872: 242); Sālim Abū al-'Alā' (al-Nadīm, 1872: 353); Sa'īd b. Khurāsānkhurrah; and 'Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā. Some later translators after the Umayyad era include the Iranian astrologers Nawbakht (d. ca. 777), Yazdānkhwāst (d. 815) and Abū Sahl b. Nawbakht (d. ca. 815) (Zakeri, 2004: 1203). In another article, Zakeri (1994) discusses in detail a Middle Persian translator, 'Alī b. 'Ubayda al-Rayḥānī.

¹⁰ Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī's (d. 961 or 971) *Ta'riḫ Sinī al-Mulūk*, Ibn al-Nadīm's (932–990) *Fihrist*, the anonymous *Mujmal al-Tawāriḫ wa-l-Qiṣaṣ* (written 1126, see 1.6.13), al-Bīrūnī's (973–1050) *Āṭār*, Bal'amī's *Tāriḫnāma-yi Ṭabarī* (written after 963, see 1.6.6) and the Older Preface to the *Prose Šāhnāma* (Minorsky, 1964; Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 59–67).

İşfahānī, 1961: 14–15, 20). We will see below that this also seems to be the case regarding the Arabic adaptations of the Bahrām Čübīn stories.

Ibn al-Nadīm also provides some of the titles of Pahlavi books translated into Arabic. These include, in addition to the books listed above, *K. Rustam wa-İsfandiyār*, *K. Kārnāmaj fī sīra Anūšīrwān*¹¹, *K. al-Tāj wa-mā tafaʿalat bi-hi mulūku-hum*, *Dārā wa-l-šanam al-dhahab*, *K. İṭṭayn-nāma*, *K. Bahrām wa-Narsī*, and *K. Anūšīrwān* (al-Nadīm, 1872: 305). In addition, al-Masʿūdī mentions in his *Murūj al-Dhahab* two books, *K. al-Baykār* and *K. al-Sakīsarān* (MS I: 229, 267–8; see 1.6.5) which were translated into Arabic (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 30–32). Other authors such as Ibn Qutayba (see 1.6.1) and anonymous *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh* (1.6.13) occasionally mention translated titles and provide short descriptions of them.

The picture that emerges is a versatile and vital cultural exchange that took shape in numerous translations. One has to remember that probably only a fraction of all translated titles and translators have come down to us. To explain the diversity, Gibb estimates that translators like Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ were followed by numerous imitations. He concludes that most of the Persian works mentioned in *Fihrist* were ephemeral works that circulated for only a limited time and then disappeared and, more importantly, that the available material in circulation must have been reused over and over again and incorporated into the works of forgotten writers (Gibb, 1962: 65). This idea should be kept in mind and used to gauge the material on Bahrām Čübīn.

Unfortunately, only citations, fragments and some longer narratives, such as the stories of Bahrām Čübīn, survive (de Blois, 2000: 231–2; Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 59–130). Regarding Jabala b. Sālīm's Arabic translation *K. Bahrām Šūbīn*, both the Middle Persian original(s) and the translation are irretrievably lost (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 33; Rubin, 2004: 235–6). A few centuries later the stories of Bahrām Čübīn appeared first in Arabic texts, and later, in the nascent Persian historiography. It is known that many Greek books were translated into Arabic several times. Nothing prevents us from assuming that the same might have happened with Middle Persian texts. By name we know only Jabala b. Sālīm's translation, but Bahrām Čübīn's story could have been translated into Arabic more than once. At the end of this study, it becomes evident that this was the case (4.15).

¹¹ *K. Kārnāmaj fī sīra Anūšīrwān* and *K. Anūšīrwān* could be the book *Sīra al-Anūšīrwān* mentioned above and attributed to Abān al-Raqāšī. The book is also mentioned by al-Masʿūdī (MS I: 289).

1.2.2. How mediaeval translators (authors) worked

None of the above-mentioned book titles have survived as a complete text or book. Therefore, it is impossible to gauge the thoroughness and accuracy of the translations or describe in detail the translators' working methods. Compared to Greek and Syriac translations into Arabic, translations of Middle Persian texts are poorly documented. Rarely do we possess passages from both the original and the translation.

In mediaeval context in general, the concept of translation – often referred to with the verb *naqala* and its derivatives and sometimes with the verb *tarjama* – should be understood with qualifications. It did not mean, as it signifies today, an accurate replication of the source language into the target language but rather reproduction of a good and readable text. For a 'translation' a better term might be transformation, adaptation or re-creation since the translated texts were often reshaped, expanded, or abridged (Daniel, 2012: 107, 115; Hämeen-Anttila, 2016: 50). Texts were fluid, open to variations, and material considered irrelevant to the audience may have been removed. This applies to mediaeval Islamic historiography in general: the authors used their sources freely and edited and rewrote material as it best suited their agenda.

In general, Arabic and Persian texts rarely quote their sources which is also the case with Middle Persian translations. When the source is mentioned, it usually contains the name of the presumed author or translator (e.g. "Ibn al-Muqaffa' said ...") or the ultimate authority, i.e., the king or sage to whom the saying or proverb is attributed, but not the name of the book where the text was found (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 28–9).

Depending on the content, translation strategies were different. Translating religious or scientific texts was very different from historical and literary texts. Transmitting religious ideas from one language to another is often a serious work requiring the text being reproduced exactly as it is, sometimes word for word. Scientific formulas, recipes and mathematical equations also require literal translation (Hämeen-Anttila, 2016: 48–9). Historical and literary texts are free from these restrictions and faithful translation from the original text is less important to produce a meaningful text in the target language. With regard to Bahrām Čübīn stories this is important. Being a non-religious and non-scientific text, a tragic story with moral tendencies and a good piece of literature probably gave more freedom to the translators to compose a readable adaptation, fit for the tastes of their readers (or listeners).

1.2.3. *Khwadāynāmag*

Khwadāynāmag, 'Book of Kings', is a lost Middle Persian book which was probably put down in writing towards the end of the sixth century, perhaps during the reign of Khusraw Anūšīrwān (r. 531–79) (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 2–3). Both the original version or versions in Middle Persian and complete translations in Arabic are lost, but, luckily, some citations and fragments survive in Arabic and Persian works.

The name *Khwadāynāmag* is a reconstruction based on the Arabic texts of al-Mas'ūdī, Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī, and others and it has not been attested in Middle Persian texts (ibid. 1).¹² The books bearing titles such as '*siyar al-ʿajam*' and '*siyar al-mulūk*', numerous in the corpus, are thought to be recensions of the *Khwadāynāmag* translated by Ibn al-Muqaffa' (MJ: 2; Yarshater, 1983: 359–61; Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 89–99). Originally the book contained information on the Sasanian kings probably with little narrative content. In later Arabic translations made by Ibn al-Muqaffa' and others, the text gained more descriptive and narrative content (ibid. 223–232). Important to our study is that long narratives of Persian origin such as the stories of Alexander, Bahrām Gūr and Bahrām Čūbīn were not part of the *Khwadāynāmag* (ibid. 97).

Since Nöldeke (1879), *Khwadāynāmag* has been an important reference in the scholarship of Islamic historiography and especially in the studies of transmission from Middle Persian to Arabic. Recently, Hämeen-Anttila (2018 a) has clarified some misconceptions related to *Khwadāynāmag* from various viewpoints. Many of the extant texts that contain traces of *Khwadāynāmag* such as Bal'amī's *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī*, al-Ṭa'ālibī's *Ghurār Akhbār Mulūk al-Furs wa-Siyari-him*, and Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma* are included in the corpus of the present study. Because of the overlapping and its similar context – *Khwadāynāmag* is also a lost book only partly preserved in later recensions – Hämeen-Anttila's book is an important reference both for content and for methodology.

1.2.4. Orality-literacy continuum

In all literary traditions, oral transmission prior to systematic collecting and redacting of written texts played a central role. In the modern world, we are overwhelmed by texts and writing in all forms. Usually there is a sharp contrast between literary product and oral performance: texts, whether journalistic, literary or scholarly are rarely recited or read aloud. In the mediaeval Islamic world, the boundaries between literary and oral presentation were flexible; oral and written

¹² For more on *Khwadāynāmag*, see Yarshater (1983), Shasbazi (1991), Macuch (2009) and Rubin (2004, 2005, 2008).

transmission supplemented each other (Schoeler, 2006: 41). Both Islamic Arabic and pre-Islamic Persian cultures have left many traces of early oral transmission of information.

Schoeler has dealt extensively with oral transmission and concludes that, in early Islamic context, knowledge was mainly transmitted through recitations (*qirā'a*) and aural lectures (*samā'*, *majālis*), although purely written transmission became increasingly important starting in the ninth century (Robinson, 2003: 37; Schoeler, 2006: 30). The Islamic tradition of transmission of knowledge was probably influenced by earlier traditions such as the system of authentication by the Jews regarding the Talmud, the transmission of pre-Islamic and early Islamic poetry called *riwāyah* and the late antique school tradition (ibid. 42–3). The discrepancies in different textual traditions, which are now preserved in written form, could have been caused by variations in a teacher's (*šaykh*) presentation, variations in its recordings by the students and transmission by the students. Often it is difficult to distinguish between transmitter and author (ibid. 37). Schoeler estimates that in the eighth and ninth centuries books often did not have fixed forms and only from about the tenth century onwards did more "stabilized" books begin to appear (ibid. 33, 36).

According to Humphreys, in early Islamic times important events such as Prophet Muḥammad's life, battles, conquests and other tales and accounts related to these events, were first told by the eye-witnesses, participants and Companions (*ṣaḥāba*); then passed to the next generations. These narratives were probably told and retold by storytellers (*quṣṣāṣ*) within the framework of *ayyām al-'arab* – battle days of the Arabs in pre-Islamic times – and later by pious persons in mosques on the occasion of *wa'z* and *khuṭba* (Humphreys, 2010: 274). Aural transmission or *hearing* books had an important place in the society. This is attested by a considerable number of blind scholars, and al-Ṣafadī (d. 1363), for instance, dedicated a whole book, *Nakṭ al-Himyān fī Nukat al-'Umyān*, to the subject of blind scholars (Robinson, 2003: 3). We also know that Persian Islamic historians often recited or taught their work at court (Melville, 2012 a: 64) which might have had an effect on the writing style.

In Persia, the *Gōsān*-tradition (originally a tradition of Parthian storytellers) played a role before and maybe after the Arabic invasions. Regarding Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma*, Boyce connects expressions like *rāmišgar*, *khunyāgar* and *nawāgar* to an old minstrel tradition which, according to her, was still alive in Firdawsī's time (2005: 21, 25, 36). It is not clear whether the oral tradition known as *Naqqālī* (or *Dāstān-Sarā'ī*) of epic storytelling was functioning before the Safavid period (1501–1722) because there are only scattered references to the storytellers before that time (Hanaway, 1994).

It could have been. The absence of written evidence does not automatically rule out the possibility of the existence of oral tradition.

Tardily developed textual transmission was only one way of passing information. Oral transmission was certainly practised in the diverse Islamic cultural milieus that form the scholarly and cultural context of the corpus. In this study, we are dealing with texts, obviously. That does not rule out, however, the possibility that Bahrām Čübīn stories had been circulating and been performed orally. Written texts could have been recited orally and received aurally. To use John Foley's terms, some of the stories can be *oral-derived* (Foley & Ramey, 2012: 83–4). I believe that it is worthwhile conceiving of orality and literacy as parallel, interacting and continuous rather than contrasting categories. As we will see below, the stories of Bahrām Čübīn have immense variations. Aural transmission or *oral-derived* texts is, indeed, a possibility to explain these variations. Rubanovich, for instance, explains the multitude of the versions of Iskandar's birth (i.e. Alexander the Great) in Persian sources by the high degree of fluctuation of motifs "between and within the 'compound retorts' of orality and textuality" (2015: 232).

1.3. Arabic and Persian Historiography

Introduction

The stories of Bahrām Čübīn are embedded in Arabic and Persian historiographical texts and were the continuation of a transmission of early Persian material, like the above-discussed *Khwadāynāmag*-tradition and other texts, to Islamic historiography. It is not the purpose of this section to embark on a lengthy and detailed discussion on Islamic historiography. However, a general presentation of recurrent themes, schemes and overall thinking about history in the mediaeval Islamic context as well as relevant scholarship should be given. I start with Arabic historiography, then move to Persian historiography, present general themes of historical writing, and, finally, discuss some important works of scholarship in the field.

The scholarship of Islamic historiography has often dealt with Arabic and Persian historiography separately. Rosenthal, Duri, Donner, and Robinson, who are discussed below, dealt with Arabic historiography whereas Browne's *A Literary History of Persia* I–IV (1902–1924), Rypka's *History of Iranian Literature* (1968), Meisami's *Persian Historiography – to the End of the Twelfth Century* (1999) and *A History of Persian Literature* I–XVIII (Yarshater (ed.) 2009–2018) can be seen as grounding works of scholarship on Persian literature and historiography. The cleavage between the two is explained naturally by different languages. Yet, the stories of Bahrām Čübīn form a transversal

platform on which Arabic and Persian historiography converge and both scholarly traditions are therefore on equal footing.

1.3.1. Arabic historiography

The Arabic word *ta'riḫ* is the specific term for history in general. As Arabic words often do, it has several meanings such as 'date' and 'era'. It gained the meanings of 'history' or 'history work' from about the 9th century onwards. Therefore, the latter meanings are relatively new. It is noteworthy that the word does not appear in pre-Islamic literature, the Qur'ān, or old *hadiths* (Rosenthal, 1968: 11–17). In the classical curriculum of Islamic students, history was never an independent discipline. Unlike theology (*fiqh*, *uṣūl al-dīn*), philosophy, and philology, history was often not recognized as a 'science' among mediaeval Muslim scholars. Historian was not a profession either, and most of the authors of historiography composed on other subjects too, such as philology, genealogy, or theology, and often had governmental positions such as viziers, court ministers, financial officials and secretaries in the chancellery (Melville, 2012 b: 57). Another very common term for historical narratives or reports was *khavar* (pl. *akhbār*).

Works recognized today by western scholars as historiography appeared gradually and were not among the first literary products of Islamic culture. Arabic historiography developed in a literary continuum preceded by sacred literature such as exegesis of the Qur'ān, *hadith*-literature, Ibn Ishāq's *Biography of the Prophet* (*sīrat rasūl allāh*), histories of other prophets and genealogies of important religious figures. Early in the beginning of Islam a need arose to record sayings (*ḥadīṭ*, pl. *aḥādīṭ*) and deeds of the prophet. A pivotal part of the *hadith*-literature was the *isnād*, chain of transmitters, as the provenance and reliability were of major importance. *Hadiths* as well as the Qur'ān were first transmitted orally, and, slowly, as the writing gained currency and materials for writing became more easily available, they were written down (Donner, 1998: 35–61; Robinson, 2003: 8–13). The formative period was completed with the ninth century and the Qur'ān and older *hadiths* were written down in a more or less definite form. This adds to what has been said above about the importance of the orality-literary continuum in Islamic culture.

Khavar is an important notion of Islamic literature and also applies to historiography. It signifies a short account of the past that usually describes one event. It may appear with or without *isnād*. Unlike *hadith*, which is usually associated with the prophet and forms a literary genre of its own, *khavar* has a wider meaning and can relate any event of the past. *Khavar* can be seen as a building block or unit of historical works since it reoccurs, in some way or other, in all Arabic historical texts.

One of its important characteristics is that *khavar* is complete in itself. *Khabars* are independent events which are not intended to form a long continuous narrative, chronological sequence, or causality between the events. Often *khavar* has the character of the vividly told short story and might contain verses of poetry (Rosenthal, 1968: 66–9). Continuous narrative form and longer accounts of the past are a later development in Arabic literature. The continuous narrative without *isnāds* was employed by many mediaeval writers of historical texts such as al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭa‘ālibī and practically all the other authors of the corpus.

The bulk of Arabic classical literature that can be labelled under the rubric of historiography is immense. The vast material can be organized in many ways and each modern scholar writing on the matter has found his or her own way to sort the wheat from the chaff. Rosenthal’s *A History of Muslim Historiography* (1968), Khalidī’s *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (1994), Donner’s *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginning of Islamic Historical Writing* (1998) and Robinson’s *Islamic Historiography* (2003) found a solid basis for understanding the beginning and evolution of historical narratives in Islamic tradition.

Rosenthal provides a broad context for Islamic historiography, starting from pre-Islamic Arabic poetry. He presents the key concepts and literary genres such as annalistic form, dynastic historiography, *ṭabaqāt* division (categories or generations of men), genealogical arrangement, biography, world histories and so forth. Khalidī deals with the historical writings through four categories or broad themes which describe the chronological stages of Arabic historiography: *hadith* and sacred history; *adab* or ‘Belles-Lettres’; *ḥikma* or ‘wisdom’; and *siyāsa* or treatises on policies and politics. Donner focuses considerably on the Qur’ān, *hadith* and their dating. Then he approaches Arabic historical writings through general themes such as *futūḥ*, *khilāfa*, *fiṭna*, taxation, pre-Islamic Arabian History and other such topics dealing briefly with pre-Islamic Iran. Robinson deals with the same material but concentrates on three broad categories: biography, prosopography and chronography. He understands historical writing through contexts such as traditionalism, society and models of history. We can note that all the four authors approach the subject, not only differently, but clearly from an Islamic vantage point. The four works are all, indeed, excellent scholarly endeavours, yet, they offer little for the specific understanding of the Persian material in Arabic historiography, its meaning, function and context.

Persian material might be mentioned but it is not discussed at length. Many mediaeval authors in Arabic and Persian were, however, influenced by Middle Persian material and earlier Persian

models of writing history as well (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: ix). It goes without saying that in this study the Persian perspective is at the forefront and under scrutiny.

1.3.2. Persian historiography

Compared to Arabic historical writing, Persian historiography was a late arrival. It seems that Classical Persian as a language of literature and science began to take shape in the 10th century in the so-called Persian literary 'renaissance'. By that time, Arabic historiography had already reached maturity and many important names such as al-Ya'qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī had already published their works. A semi-legendary body of pre-Islamic Persian history or Iranian national history had already been assimilated into the Arabic historiographical texts (Daniel, 2012: 101–2; Yarshater, 1983). Because all the authors writing in Persian must have had an education in Arabic (Melville, 2012 a: xxxvi) and probably the audience also knew Arabic, a question of the purpose of Persian historiography arises. Modern scholarship has not yet satisfactorily explained the circumstances of the rebirth of Persian literature (Peacock, 2007: 15). Compared to the number of Arabic works the amount of Persian historiography is also relatively small. All the preserved and lost works in Persian before the Mongol invasion combined amount to less than twenty (Daniel, 2012: 101), whereas the number of Arabic authors, let alone the works, counts over a hundred.¹³ One explanation for the emergence of Persian historiography, especially the translations from Arabic to Persian, might be that the authors wanted to provide versions of Arabic scholarship to an audience that did not have an education in Arabic (Daniel, 2012:105–6).

The reader of early Persian literature should take into account that survival bias might distort our understanding. Very few works, let alone manuscripts, from the 10th century have survived and our understanding of the Persian literary 'renaissance' is solely based on these. Poetry and literature in verse was probably written even before the 10th century (Browne, 1925: 12). Dynasties like the Samanids, Ghaznavids and Seljuqs commissioned Persian historiography although individual works were motivated by different cultural, linguistic and political situations. The evidence suggests that the 'renaissance' of the Persian language was a combination of several independent separatist movements rather than a reflection of large-scale Persian 'nationalistic' aspirations (Meisami, 2012: 7; see 1.4).

¹³ Al-Sakhāwī (1427–97), a prolific 15th-century scholar, counts 158 Arabic 'historians' in his *al-l'ān bi-l-Tawbīkh li-man Dhamma Ahl al-Ta'rikh* (1986: 300–314). See also Rosenthal's translation of the book (1968: 263–535).

It is clear, however, that Classical Persian did not emerge from a literary vacuum. According to Rypka, written Middle Persian was used in Iran at least up to the 11th century whereas the New Persian language which later took written form probably existed already in the 7th century in spoken form (Rypka, 1968: 66–7). There is much fragmentary evidence and other indications that the birth of Classical Persian was part of a continuation of literary expression (Cereti, 2009; Meisami, 2012: 7).

The development of Persian historiography is intertwined in many ways with Arabic historiography: Persian historiography used the preceding works in Arabic as a working model; a considerable share of Islamic historiography in Arabic was written by Iranians; both Arabic and Persian historiography addressed the same task in chronicling the development of the Muslim community; and all the authors writing in Persian must have had an education in Arabic (Melville, 2012 a: xxxvi). As in many Arabic works, a continuous narrative became the standard form of Persian historical writing (Meisami, 2012: 12).¹⁴ However, the writings in the two languages exhibit some notable differences. Persian historiography seldom organized its content annalistically but, instead, according to prominent men or a town or region (Melville, 2012 b: 62). Early Persian historiography includes a considerable number of local histories such as *Ta'rikh-i Sistān*, *Fārsnāma* and *Ta'rikh-i Tabaristān* (Daniel, 2012: 139–48) which reflect an increasingly fragmented regional political system. The Seljuqs wrote some dynastic histories such as *Malik-Nāma* and *Saljuq-Nāma* to immortalize the deeds of their rulers and secure the place of their dynasty in history (Daniel, 2012: 149–54), but in general the rulers showed little interest in the commissioning of historical works (Peacock, 2014: 19).

1.3.3. Historical thinking and schemes of mediaeval Arabic and Persian historiography

We often think of historical writing today as a record of facts that aims to describe the events of the past accurately “as they happened”. This is, at least, the popular view. Writing style and scholarly approach may vary, of course, but the underlying expectation is that we can learn about history through facts and a verified course of events. The implicit contract between the reader and author is that the latter tells the “truth”.¹⁵ Mediaeval authors too often stress that the information they

¹⁴ *Khabar*-form historiographical writing in Arabic continued to be employed alongside continuous narrative throughout the Middle Ages.

¹⁵ Shoshan expresses a similar idea in the discussion on al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rikh* and its reception by modern readers (2004: xix): “Thus, in the modern eye, history must be purged of fiction, since the opposition of ‘history’ to ‘fiction’ is tantamount to that of truth to falsehood and the exclusion of the latter guarantees the scientific rigor of the former.”

provide is accurate and correct. In the corpus, this can be seen in the texts of al-Ṭabarī, al-Maqrīzī and *Muḥall* (1.6.4, 1.6.7, 1.6.13).

Early scholars of Islamic historiography such as Nöldeke, Brown and Brockelmann gauged historical texts either by their assumed historical veracity or concentrated on philological issues. The Islamic historical texts were seen as mines of facts and the object of the scholarly endeavour was to separate 'facts' from 'fiction'. The texts were considered depositories of historical facts (Meisami, 1999: 2). From a modern perspective, it would be overly simplistic to regard Islamic historiography as a mere record of facts and source of factual information. Aesthetics of writing, rhetoric devices, subjectivity in choosing the topics, and political circumstances are often closely intermingled with the events the writer describes. The broader historical context and literary qualities were soon taken into consideration and questions of style, audience, patronage and reception were asked. The boundaries between historiography and belles-lettres are often blurred. Often the texts bear impressions of a literary exercise: panegyric poetry of rulers and patrons, adorned language (*inṣāʿ*) and other literary artifices are manifest (Melville, 2012 b: 61–3, 71–2; Meisami, 2012: 19–34) to the extent that the writing styles of different authors are sometimes distinct and recognizable.

Therefore, when engaging with early Arabic and Persian historiography, we must readjust and question some of the basic assumption of a historical work: What exactly is a work of history? Is it a work of science or literature? What is the author's input regarding writing style and aesthetic and rhetoric devices? What is the difference between historiography and literature? What did the author intend to do?¹⁶ What is the core message of a given text? I do not attempt to address these questions directly in this study even though the texts and contexts analysed may cast some light on them. Rather, the questions illustrate the wide gap of historical thinking between modern and premodern times and bring forth some fundamental ideas that the reader of mediaeval Arabic and Persian historiography must take into account (Melville, 2012 a: xxviii).

History in mediaeval times was perceived as exemplary. Its intent was often ethical and its means rhetorical and therefore the geographical, cultural, societal, political and religious details should be taken into consideration (Meisami, 2012: 1). Islamic historiography can be labelled as a repository of moral lessons (Mottahedeh, 1994: 23). From a factual point of view, early Arabic and Persian sources can give complementary historical information, but they often contain legendary and

¹⁶ Rosenthal's general remark on the study of Arabic historiography applies to this context too (1968: 7): "[...] the question to be answered here is not: What is the historical importance of something an author says?, but: What did he do with whatever information was available to him?"

fabulous elements. It is often safe to consider them more like exemplary stories from the past rather than historical accounts in the modern sense.

Many recognizable themes and topoi of historical thinking that pervade Islamic historiography, for instance, lineage from Adam or genealogies in general (1.4.4), comparative chronology (Mottahedeh, 1994: 19–20; Hämeen-Anttila, 2016: 51), legitimacy of the ruler, the conventional model of Persian pre-Islamic history (1.4), the viziers or advisors of the ruler and many others. Noth discusses many literary topoi in Arabic historiography (1994: 109–172). Islamic historiographers engaged in writing from many external motives. Some of them wrote dynastic histories, some were concerned with geographical places and some with sacred histories of prophets or other eminent men.

1.3.4. Bahrām Čübīn in scholarship

In addition to the scholarship discussed above, I want to point out some studies that address Bahrām Čübīn or issues related to him directly. It was Theodor Nöldeke who first pointed out the possibility that the accounts of Bahrām Čübīn in Arabic and Persian texts derived from a Middle Persian romance (1879: 474–78).¹⁷ After this, at the beginning of the 20th century, Arthur Christensen attempted to reconstruct the story in his book *Romanen om Bahrām Tschôbîn – et rekonstruktionsforsøg* (1907) using al-Dīnawarī's, al-Ya' qūbī's, al-Ṭabarī's, al-Mas'ūdī's, *Nihāyat's*, and al-Ṭa'ālībī's accounts. The main weakness of his work is its impressionistic and hypothetical nature. Christensen's comparison does not bring forth textual details, differences and similarities which, I believe, are the key to a deeper understanding of the texts. Therefore, his research remains preliminary. Christensen believed that he could reconstruct the original Middle Persian version based on the Arabic recensions. In the light of today's research, reconstructing an original version is an obsolete idea.

In this study, I will demonstrate that behind the Arabic and Persian recensions hides a complex set of texts which cannot be reduced to a single version. This study is not a sequel to Christensen's book even though it partly uses the same sources and a comparative approach. The methodology and the sources are different (see 2.1, 2.2).

Czeglédy dealt with Bahrām Čübīn in his article 'Bahrām Čübīn and the Persian Apocalyptic Literature' (1958). He contextualizes the Bahrām Čübīn story in the Persian eschatological and

¹⁷ Before Nöldeke, Bartholom d'Herbelot mentioned Bahrām Čübīn in his *Bibliothèque orientale* (1777 vol. I: 337–8; vol. II: 258–61, 441–6) without discussing his sources or problems related to the transmission of Bahrām Čübīn stories.

apocalyptic literature, namely *Jāmāsp-nāmag* and *Zand ī Vahman Yasn* which have adopted material from the *Bundahišn*. Czeglédý identifies three *vaticinia ex eventu* about Bahrām Čübīn. In them a false pretender whom Czeglédý identifies with Bahrām Čübīn emerges from Khorasan. Other parallels with story the in Arabic and Persian sources are a deaf and blind king who resembles Hurmuzd IV; Frāsyāp's (i.e., Afrāsiyāb) treasures which can be compared to Bahrām's vast spoils of war; and Kay Vahrām, a name which is the same as Bahrām alias Čübīn (Czeglédý, 1958: 38–9).

Altheim deals with Bahrām Čübīn in his article 'The Most Ancient Romance of Chivalry' (1958) and provides a translation of al-Dīnawarī's versions of Bahrām's story. Altheim reflects the story through literary concepts such as tragedy, chivalry, and heroism and compares it to the epic of the Burgundians and the Edda Saga (1958: 143). Altheim does not compare al-Dīnawarī's version to other Arabic or Persian texts or cite research literature and claims without qualifications that al-Dīnawarī's version represents the oldest and fullest translation of the story (1958: 134).

Zeev Rubin dealt with the Sasanian matters from the point of view of Arabic historiography in his articles "Al-Ṭabarī and the age of the Sasanians" (2008), "Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī's Sources for Sasanian History" (2008), and Bahrām Čübīn in particular in "Nobility, monarchy and legitimation under the later Sasanians" (2004). He focuses on the underlying motif of royal legitimacy in the story of Bahrām Čübīn. According to him, Bahrām Čübīn is a representative aristocratic figure and the original Middle Persian text was written in a particular framework discussing the relations between the nobles and the king. In other words, the social circles which were the audience of the text wanted clear answers to the questions concerning the role of the nobles, nobles' right to rebel, and the legitimacy of the king. As a noble usurper, Bahrām was a case in point.

Since Christensen, the transmission history and inner dynamics of the texts transmitting Bahrām Čübīn stories have not been a subject for scholarly study. Recently, however, Hoyland (2018) has translated the Persian sections of al-Ya'qūbī, al-Mas'ūdī, and Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī and, in passing, made some comments about the transmission of Bahrām Čübīn accounts. He makes an assumption that *K. Bahrām Šūbīn*, mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm, passed directly on from Jabala b. Sālim to al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, and al-Mas'ūdī (Hoyland, 2018: 172). Our evidence, instead, suggests a much more complicated transmission history (4.1–4.14). What is more, he does not pay attention to the identity of the two known Arabic book titles on Bahrām Čübīn, that of Ibn al-Nadīm and al-Mas'ūdī (MS: 318; see 1.6.5) and their possible differences in content. He claims, without qualifications, that the Bahrām Čübīn accounts in al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, and al-Ṭabarī are very similar and, therefore, must derive from the same source text (Hoyland, 2018: 20, n. 73). My

detailed textual analysis shows to a great extent the opposite results: early Arabic versions must have been based on multiple sources (see 4.3). Of course, Hoyland's comments are very general and as Bahrām Čübīn was not the primary subject of his book, he cannot be blamed for the lack of acquaintance with a very complex transmission history and the divergent versions of these accounts. Nevertheless, the comments above highlight a general lacuna of scholarship with regard to Bahrām Čübīn stories, a lacuna which is intended to be filled by this study.

1.4. Iranian national history and the Persian context

All the texts of the corpus contain pre-Islamic Iranian material and parts of Iranian national history, to use the term coined by Yarshater (1983). Many Persianized elements, topoi, themes and vocabulary loom large. The object of the study itself, Bahrām Čübīn, is, of course, primarily a Persian topic.¹⁸

The stories of Bahrām Čübīn are transmitted as part of Iranian national history. The place of the story is important. It is never detached from the conventional model of writing Persian history adopted by mediaeval Arabic and Persian writers: the four-part scheme of pre-Islamic Persian history including the Pišdadiyans, the Kayanids, the Ašghaniyans and the Sasanians. The Bahrām Čübīn story is naturally part of the Sasanians and the reigns of Hurmuzd IV and Khusraw II where it historically belongs. In the evolution of Islamic historiography, the inclusion of the four-part model was a significant development and the combination of sacred Islamic history and Persian history remained a basic structure for Arabic historiography for more than a millennium (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 102).

1.4.1. *Šu'ūbīs* and *šu'ūbiyya* 'movement'

In the context of presenting Persian material to the Arabic cultural milieu the terms *šu'ūbī* and *šu'ūbiyya* are essential. Although the concepts are debated and somewhat controversial, in scholarship they often relate to non-Arabs, especially Iranians, who advocate superiority over the Arabs or refuse to recognize their privileged position. The term originates from the Qur'ān (49:13) and refers to different 'peoples' (*šu'ūb*) of the Muslim community. The Qur'ānic verse was first used

¹⁸ I am aware that the words for Persia (e.g. *īrān*, *fārs*, *fāris*, *īrānšahr*) and Persians (*furs*) and the idea of Iran have had many connotations and that gauging exclusively lexical practices might result in oversimplistic understanding of the terms. In Islamic historiography, these terms had significantly different resonance depending on the writer's affiliations and whether or not they were used in a genuinely Islamic context or within the recensions of the Iranian national history. See, e.g. Ashraf (2006), Gnoli (2006), and Savant (2008). In this study, I do not intend to give any specific definition for the words Persia/Iran and Persians because each text of the corpus present a different context and speaks for its self.

as religious grounds to argue that no race or tribe, particularly the Quraish, had inherent superiority over others (Gibb, 1962: 66–7). The later generations in the ninth and tenth centuries are thought to have associated the term mainly with the Persians and their aspirations for recognition and power.

Goldziher (1967) discusses the term in two articles mainly as a literary movement and cites many interesting examples of how Arab-Persian antagonism played out. He demonstrates that the *šū‘ūbiyya* ‘movement’ was not limited exclusively to Persians, although their input left the most traces in the extant literature, but other ethnic groups such as native Syrians, Nabateans, Daylamites and Egyptian Copts had identitarian aspirations too (Goldziher, 1967: 144–8). Gibb suggested that the *šū‘ūbiyya* ‘movement’ reflected competing cultural values and a struggle over the inner spirit of Islamic culture in early Abbasid times. The *šū‘ūbīs* did not want to destroy the Islamic culture but to remould its political and social institutions on the model of Sasanian institutions and values (Gibb, 1962: 66).¹⁹

In the context of Ibn Qutayba’s *Faḍl al-‘Arab wa-l-Tanbīh ‘Ulūmi-hā* (The Excellence of the Arabs), Savant lists three reasons why the Persians were targeted. First, the increasing cultural confidence of the Persians was perceived as challenging the preeminent place of the Arabs in the society. Second, the Persians were devoid of military power so they could be criticized without fear of serious reprisal or military aggression. Third, the Persians were blamed for opening the door to foreign elements in Islam (Savant, 2017: xv). In another article, Savant has credibly argued that the meaning of *šū‘ūbiyya* is more ambiguous and vague than previously thought. She points out that the term is often applied retroactively to past generations, not to writers’ contemporaries; that there are no self-proclaimed *šū‘ūbīs*; and that the ideological content of the movement is uncertain and obscure. The classical biographers seem to associate the term mainly with the early Abbasid caliphate and specifically with Baghdad (Savant, 2016: 169, 172–3).

The corpus of the present study is very heterogeneous (see 1.5) and the motives for writing as well as the contexts vary (see 1.6). It is therefore impossible to label the texts under the same rubric, whether historic, historiographical, ideological or stylistic. As the meaning of the concept is uncertain, it would be hazardous to call the authors *šū‘ūbīs*. The corpus, however, shares many of the supposed characteristics of the *šū‘ūbiyya* ‘movement’. What then would be an accurate label for the authors who transmit Iranian national history? As all the texts of the corpus are, one way or

¹⁹ Savant provides a detailed presentation of the *šū‘ūbiyya* term in scholarship (2016: 166–9).

another, carriers of Persian pre-Islamic culture, I opted for a broader definition: the authors of the corpus can be called transmitters of Persian cultural heritage. One way or another, they all defended the pre-Islamic Persian culture, its place and *raison d'être* in Islamic historiography. This too was the broader framework for the emergence of Bahrām Čübīn stories in Islamic historiography.

1.4.2. Iranian origins of the authors

The Iranians were the only people of the lands conquered by the Arabs who succeeded in bringing their pre-Islamic history into the Islamic worldview (Goldziher, 1967: 144–8). Historiographers of Iranian origin in particular included legendary Persian material in their works. It is noteworthy that the majority of the authors in the corpus are of Iranian origin. Ibn Qutayba, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, Gardīzī, Ibn al-Balkhī, *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh's* writer, and probably al-Ya'qūbī and al-Maqdisī are included in this group. We have no information about *Nihāyat's* writer. As far as we know, only al-Mas'ūdī and Ibn al-Aṭīr had non-Persian origins. Their descent may have influenced the authors' motivation to include Persian material in the texts.

It seems that the choice of language, be it Arabic or Persian, was not reflective of the writer's cultural identity. The choice was rather based on other circumstantial factors. The writers in Arabic simply used the *lingua franca* of the time. In the first centuries of Islamic historiography classical Persian was not an option because it was introduced only from the 10th century onwards as a language of literature and science.

1.4.3. Dynastic policies and pre-Islamic Iranian history

The secretaries of the early Abbasids studied court literature, drawing inspiration from the past Persian tradition, and sought guidance in the models of the ancient court culture of the Sasanians (Savant, 2017: xiv–xv). Revival of Persian culture and language can be observed in many ways in the dynasties of Abbasid times which often drew on pre-Islamic Persia and traced their ancestry back to Iranian mythological heroes. According to Savran, these examples are indicative of the “Iranian renaissance” which gradually gained space stemming from growing Iranian cultural and political influence between 750 and 1050 (2018: 39–48). However, the evidence is sometimes contradictory and unbalanced. Some of the dynasties promoted the Persian language and some were hostile to it. The political, ideological and cultural fabric behind the dynasties was probably more complex and fluctuating than we understand it to be. Only glimpses of it have come down to us.

There are two accounts on how the Tahirids (821–873) traced their lineage. According to al-Mas'ūdī, they traced their ancestry from the legendary hero Rustam (Savran, 2018: 40; al-Mas'ūdī,

1893: 347). Minhāj al-Dīn Sirāj al-Jūzjānī's *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* says, however, that they claimed their lineage from Manūčīhr, a legendary king of the Pišdadiyans (1342: 190). The Tahirids, patrons of al-Ya'qūbī writing in Arabic, were actively hostile to Persian literature. During their dynasty, writing literature or poetry in Persian was not encouraged even though the Persian language was probably tolerated at the court (Bosworth, 1977: 103–6).

By contrast, the Samanids (819–999) are celebrated for reviving Persian literary culture. They patronized the earliest canon of Persian poetry, prose, and historical writing including Bal'amī, Firdawsī and possibly al-Maqqdīsī (Huart 1901: 20; Anonymous, 1993: 762). The Samanid ruler Naṣr b. Aḥmad adopted the use of Persian in his administration and commissioned a Persian translation of *Kalīla wa-Dimna* (Daniel, 2012: 103). According to Treadwell, the project to translate texts from Arabic to Persian – for instance, al-Ṭabarī's *Tafsīr* and *Ta'riḫ* – was driven by a political rather than literary agenda. The dynasty needed to create a common culture based on the Persian language in order to integrate diverse frontier zones and indigenous social identities under their rule. They were more interested in maintaining control over the eastern steppes of their territories than in the Iranian plateau (Treadwell, 2012: 4–9, 12–13). Daniel argues that the use of Persian provided an independent identity for the Samanids when contrasted with the Buyids, whose literary culture was composed almost exclusively in Arabic (2012: 109). Regardless of their use of Persian as an official language, the Samanids had some sort of extra-Iranian identity since they occupied the steppe outside the Iranian heartland. It seems that the dominant cultural undercurrent in the Samanid realm was religious Sunni conservatism rather than Iranian national enthusiasm (Peacock, 2007: 15). Regarding Bahrām Čūbīn, links to the Samanid court are crucial because the Samanids derived their lineage directly from Bahrām Čūbīn (BL I: 2). The Buyids (935–1055) too claimed Sasanian descent through the king Bahrām V Gūr (Savant, 2013: 7; Savran, 2018: 42).

The Ghaznavids (962–1187) drew their genealogy from Yazdagird III (Savran, 2018: 42). They were of Turkish origin and patronized Bayhaqī, Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī but their language policy was somewhat ambiguous. Under different rulers the court language vacillated between Arabic and Persian. Persian, however, gradually replaced Arabic in the eleventh century (Bosworth, 1998: 231). According to Meisami, pieces of evidence indicate that the Ghaznavids showed a relative lack of interest in Iranian cultural traditions and, for instance, the sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna (971–1030) was indifferent to Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma* (Meisami, 1999: 51–2) and Bayhaqī showed a negative attitude, if not disdain, toward Iranian historical traditions (Meisami, 1999: 107–8). Recently, Peacock has reconsidered the claim of the Ghaznavids' indifference towards *Šāhnāma* and argued

reasonably that the stories of Iranian legendary heroes were probably highly relevant in legitimizing Ghaznavid rule and reviving Iranian kingship (2018: 11).

The Seljuqs (1037–1194) were nomads of Turkish ethnicity, promoted Sunni Islam and traced their ancestry back to Afrāsiāb (Czeglédy, 1958: 30). They occupied the land where both Arabic and Persian languages were flourishing (Meisami, 1999: 144) although the administrative language was mainly Persian. Peacock points out that the historiographical products of the eastern and western parts of the dynasty were distinctively different, as the western parts distinguished themselves by historiography inspired by factional rivalries (2014: 11–16). Many of the Seljuq sultans were illiterate (Meisami, 1999: 143) which stands in sharp contrast to the literary-enthusiast culture of the Samanid and Ghaznavid courts, although, some continuity of similar motives for composition between Seljuq and Ghaznavid historiography can be seen (Cahen, 1962; Peacock, 2014). Ibn al-Balkhī's *Fārsnāma* and the anonymous *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh* are the two earliest extant Persian histories of the Seljuq period (Meisami, 1999: 142) albeit in general very few historical works were patronized under the Seljuqs.

As Khalidi has pointed out, historical writing in all cultures and times has been peculiarly susceptible to surrounding climates of ideas and beliefs (Khalidi, 1994: 232). This is certainly the case with the corpus as it reflects many political, cultural and identitarian aspirations.

1.4.4. Genealogies and Persians as part of Islamic history

The Persian genealogies are an important motive. Many texts promote the idea of the Persians' primordial connections to the sacred tradition of Islam. This took form in a variety of ways and often the writers attempted to systematically create genealogies that connect Persians to the early prophets such as Isaac, Abraham or Noah (Savant, 2013: 32, 37–54). The merger of Iranian mythical and Islamic sacred traditions is manifested in many places in the corpus.

In Abrahamic tradition, Islam included, all of humanity descended from Adam, but in ancient Iranian mythology Gayūmart was the father of humanity. This required negotiation, and synchronization of the two traditions is found in practically all the texts of Islamic historiography including pre-Islamic Persian material. Al-Mas'ūdī, for instance, mentions that some of the Iranians consider Gayūmart as the father of humanity but gives other explanations such as that Gayūmart is Adam's eldest son or one of Noah's descendants (MS I: 260). In *Murūj al-Dhahab*, Al-Mas'ūdī juxtaposes many theories of the Persians' genealogies and does not reconcile the contradictions in them. He reports that according to some, the Persians descended from Hidrām b. Arfakhšad b. Sām

(Shem) b. Nūh (Noah). Hidrām was allegedly a father of ten and some men who all were courageous horsemen (*fāris*) and called “Persians” (*furs*) for their chivalry skills (*al-furūsiyya*). According to another explanation, the Persians descended from Bawwān b. Īrān b. Yāsūr b. Sām (Shem) b. Nūh (Noah) (MS I: 278). In addition to these, al-Mas’ūdī presents four other theories according to which the Persian descend either from Yūsuf b. Ya’qūb b. Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm, from Lūt through his two daughters Rabbatā and Za’iratā, from Īraj b. Afarīdūn or from a figure called ‘Aylām (MS I: 279; Savant, 2014: 116–8). It seems that al-Mas’ūdī had a wide variety of material at his disposal: Iranian national history including the Sasanians and Islamic prophetic genealogies (Savant, 2014: 120–1).

Al-Ṭabarī proceeds in a similar fashion and presents Islamic prophets such as Adam, Seth, Noah, Abraham, and Isaac and other personages intertwined with Persian mythical figures such as Gayūmart, Hūšang, Jamšīd, and Farīdūn. According to him, Gayūmart would be Adam, Mašī would be Seth, Siyāmak would be Enoš, Afrawak would be Kenan and Hūšang would be Mahalael (Savant, 2013: 42). The particularity of al-Ṭabarī is that he treats Zoroastrian opinions as plausible and expresses his opinion that the most reliable model for understanding events of history would be the Persian model (Savant, 2013: 41, 43).

Al-Dīnawarī too presents a confusing mixture of figures from Abrahamic tradition and material from Iranian national history. In al-Dīnawarī’s view of pre-Islamic history, the Iranian mythical king Jamšīd was a descendant of Noah, and Ḍaḥḥāk, who challenged his rule, is identified as a descendant of the Arabic tribe of ‘Ād. Al-Dīnawarī’s text gives very little attention to major events of Islamic history such as the birth or life of the Prophet Muḥammad, which emphasizes his Persian point of view, but, on the other hand, he does not accredit the Iranians with a special place in history but rather sees them as a branch of the human race among the others (Savant, 2013: 149–156).

Similar models of fusing Persian kings and the sacred history of Islam are followed by Bal’amī, al-Maqdisī, al-Ṭa’ālibī, *Nihāyat*, Ibn al-Balkhī and Ibn al-Aṭīr who all juxtapose or identify figures from the two categories in their particular ways. Some of the texts connect the Persians to the sacred history of Islam in other ways. Al-Mas’ūdī says, for instance, that Sāsān, the founder of the Sasanian dynasty went to circumambulate the Ka’ba in honour of their grandfather and that the well of Ismael, known as Zamzam, was given that name because the Persian mumbled (‘*zamzama*’ in Arabic) prayers over it (Savant, 2013: 47; MS I: 283). Ibn al-Balkhī cites two *ḥadīths* and three Qur’ānic verses which all, according to him, affirm the Persians’ firm place in Islamic history (BKH: 5–8; see 1.6.12). Ibn Qutayba in his *Faḍl al-‘Arab wa-l-Tanbīh ‘Ulūmi-hā* refers to one of the two

hadiths to underline the position of the Persians, or more precisely the people of Khurasan, in the sacred history of Islam (Savant, 2017: xv).

1.5. General presentation of the corpus

In this section, which is followed by a more detailed description of each source, I will present the corpus. The corpus includes fourteen texts which represent the earliest texts containing stories of Bahrām Čübīn in Arabic and Classical Persian.²⁰ As a whole, the corpus is very heterogeneous. It is difficult to speak of a typical work. The source texts used in this study are the following:

- 1) Ibn Qutayba (d. 889), *Kitāb al-Ma'ārif* (in Arabic)
- 2) al-Dīnawarī (d. ca. 903), *Kitāb al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl* (in Arabic)
- 3) Al-Ya'qūbī (d. ca. 905), *Ta'rīkh* (in Arabic)
- 4) al-Ṭabarī (d. 923), *Ta'rīkh al-Rusul wa-l-Mulūk* (in Arabic)
- 5) al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab wa-Ma'ādin al-Jawhar* (written in 956) (in Arabic)
- 6) Bal'amī, *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī* (written after 963) (in Persian)
- 7) Al-Maqdisī (written in 966), *Kitāb al-Bad' wa-l-Ta'rīkh* (in Arabic)
- 8) Firdawsī (d. ca. 1020), *Šāhnāma* (in Persian)
- 9) al-Ṭa'ālibī (d. 1038), *Ghurur Akhbār Mulūk al-Furs wa-Siyari-him* (in Arabic)
- 10) *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Akhbār al-Furs wa-l-'Arab* (anonymous, written ca. 1000–1050)²¹ (in Arabic)
- 11) Gardīzī, *Zayn al-Akhbār* (written before 1052) (in Persian)
- 12) Ibn al-Balkhī, *Fārsnāma* (written in 1116) (in Persian)
- 13) *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh wa-l-Qiṣaṣ* (anonymous, written in 1126) (in Persian)

²⁰ In addition to the corpus, Bahrām Čübīn's name or part of the story is mentioned in Simocatta and Sebeos discussed above (see 1.1), in an anonymous Syriac text (al-Ka' bī, 2016: 10) and in another Syriac text known as Guidi's text (edited by Nöldeke, 1893: 5). The following Arabic and Persian texts are excluded from the corpus because they contain a different narrative structure and clearly stem from another tradition: Eutychius (877–940) mentions Bahrām Čübīn (written *Sūnir*) when discussing Hurmuzd IV's and Khusraw II's reigns (Eutychius, 1906: 213–5), and The Chronicle of Seert mentions Bahrām twice (Cronaca di Séert, 1907: 443–4, 465–6). The latter two texts are part of a different historiographical tradition and do not share the core narrative structure of the story. Niẓām al-Mulk (1018–1092) refers to him in an anecdote (1960: 76–7) which has nothing in common with the story of Bahrām Čübīn. Niẓāmī Ganjawī (1141–1209) mentions Bahrām challenging Khusraw II's rule in the tragic romance of *Khusraw wa-Šīrīn* (1393(=2014): 113–8, 155–64, 183–90) but his text is highly elaborated fictive literature written for a very different audience. Minhāj al-Dīn Sirāj al-Jūzjānī refers to Bahrām Čübīn in his *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāsirī* (1342: 167–7) but the text does not share the narrative structure of the story. The anonymous Persian adaptation of *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Akhbār al-Furs wa-l-'Arab* known as *Tajārūb al-Umam fī Akhbār Mulūk al-'Arab wa-l-'Ajam* tells the story of Bahrām Čübīn (Anon., 1373: 318–340), which is a shortened version of *Nihāyat* and brings nothing new to the story (see 1.6.10).

²¹ Dating of the book is problematic. See sections 1.6.10 and 4.7.

14) Ibn al-Aṭīr, *Kitāb al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rikh* (written before 1233) (in Arabic)

The texts are in two languages, Arabic and Persian, from different authors and from different intellectual, cultural and historical milieus stretching from the end of the 9th century to the beginning of the 13th century. What is more, *Mujmal al-Tawārikh wa-l-Qiṣaṣ* and *Nihāyat al-'Arab fī Akhbār al-Furs wa-l-'Arab* are from anonymous writers and *Nihāyat*'s dating is uncertain (see 1.6.10). Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma* stands out as being the only epic text with versified poetical content. All the other texts can be roughly labelled as mediaeval Arabic and Persian historiographical literature. This group can be further divided into universal histories and other historiographical texts. Universal histories include the texts of al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya' qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, Bal'amī, al-Maqdisī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, Gardīzī, *Mujmal*, and Ibn al-Aṭīr whereas other historical texts include Ibn Qutayba, *Nihāyat* and Ibn al-Balkhī. Writing styles differ considerably from one version to another. To give some examples:

1. Al-Mas'ūdī, al-Maqdisī and al-Ṭa'ālibī include poetry in the account of Bahrām Čübīn; other versions do not.²²
2. Bal'amī makes significant structural changes, which means that some of the events are mentioned even multiple times. For instance, Hurmuzd IV appoints Bahrām Čübīn three times as general of his troops.
3. Gardīzī employs a dry and succinct style whereas Bal'amī is prolix and descriptive.
4. Al-Mas'ūdī has a disproportionately long passage on the horse of Khusraw II called Šabdāz (MS I: 314) and negotiations and exchange of gifts between Maurice and Khusraw II (MS I: 316) that are absent in other versions.
5. General narrative outline and sometimes the order of the narrative motifs varies from one version to another (see 2.3, Appendix A.).

The length and nomenclature are also very different. The list of names of characters and places is found in the appendices. The chart below shows the coverage of Bahrām Čübīn story in different versions, although one must bear in mind that page size may vary from one edition to another:

Chart 1.

²² Rosenthal states that it is rare to find a historical work entirely free of poetical quotations (1968: 67). This is true for the authors of the corpus too. Even though only the three mentioned include poetry in the account of Bahrām Čübīn, poetry can be found elsewhere in other texts of the corpus.

	Number of pages	Reference	Number of persons mentioned	Number of places mentioned
QT	1	QT: 664	5	3
YQ	9	YQ: 187–195	30	10
DN	29	DN: 81–110	65	44
ṬB	10	ṬB I: 991–1001	38	21
MS	7	MS I: 312–318	35	26
BL	54	BL II: 762–805, 835–839, 1010–1015	69	41
MQ	3	MQ III: 150, 169–170	8	6
FD	374	FD VII: 487–629 (or 1650 verses); FD VIII: 7–239 (or 3082 verses)	115	54
ṬB	45	ṬB: 642–687 ²³	29	16
NH	46	NH: 350–396	73	63
GD	3	GD: 98–100	17	7
BKh	6	BKh: 98–103	20	13
MJ	7	MJ: 76–79, 88, 96, 136	21	10
AT	5	AT: 364–8	20	17

Taking into account the variety of the content, one may conclude that the fourteen texts can be considered as independent versions of the Bahrām Čübīn story, meaning that they have their own original writing style, length, wording and nomenclature. However, this does not exclude the possibility that the versions are dependent on one another directly or by intermediary sources. The previous research has shown links between the following texts:

- Al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* share significantly in their content although *Nihāyat* is much longer. This connection was acknowledged early in the research literature (Nöldeke, 1879: 475–6; Browne, 1900: 258; Grignaschi, 1969 & 1974).
- Ibn al-Aṭīr draws copiously on al-Ṭabarī (AT: 6–7; Robinson, 2003: 98–9), which can be seen in the Bahrām Čübīn story. Al-Ṭabarī's text is longer but overall there are few differences and the nomenclature is practically the same.
- Bal'amī's *Ta'rīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī* is a rewritten and modified version of al-Ṭabarī's *al-Ta'rīkh* (Peacock, 2007). As a whole, Bal'amī's text is considerably shorter than al-Ṭabarī's. Yet, regarding the Bahrām Čübīn story the situation is quite the opposite since it is substantially longer and differs in significant ways (Maristo, 2016: 21).
- Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī have a common source but the latter cannot be utterly dependent on the former (Zotenberg, 1900: 18–40; Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 149–52). However, in the

²³ The edition of Zotenberg provides the French translation below the Arabic text which diminishes the amount of Arabic text by half. Therefore, the number of pages in the case of al-Ṭa'ālibī is not directly comparable with the other texts.

story of Bahrām Čübīn this connection is less evident and Firdawsī's text has less similitude with al-Ta'ālibī than with other versions in the corpus.

In addition, in this study I have noticed that Ibn Qutayba's and al-Maqdisī's texts resemble one another considerably. The two versions of the Bahrām Čübīn story are very short. Yet, they share with one another significantly in their wording. Therefore, it is almost certain that al-Maqdisī used Ibn Qutayba as a source for this part, or they had the same source text. In the chart below the similarities are indicated:

Passages of Ibn Qutayba's text	Passages of al-Maqdisī's text
<i>ṭumma malaka ibnu-hu hurmuz, fa-jāra wa-'asafa</i> (QT: 664)	<i>ṭumma malaka ibnu-hu hurmuz bin kisrā, fa-jāra wa-'asafa</i> (MQ: 169)
<i>wa-khalā'a yada-hu min ṭā'ati-hi</i> (QT: 664)	<i>ṭumma khala'a yad bahrām 'an ṭā'ati-hi</i> (MQ: 169)
<i>fa-waṭaba man kāna bi-l-'Irāq min junūd Bahrām fa-samalū 'aynay-hi</i> (QT: 664)	<i>fa-waṭabū 'alay-hi wa-samalū 'aynay-hi</i> (MQ: 169)
<i>fa-lam yuzal yadussu 'alay-hi</i> (QT: 664)	<i>fa-lam yuzal yadussu 'alā Bahrām</i> (MQ: 170)
<i>ḥattā qutla hunāka</i> (QT: 664)	<i>ḥattā qutla</i> (MQ: 170)

Acknowledging these connections will be a starting point for further and more detailed comparison. One must understand that in other cases the similarities are often not as apparent as the above examples and seldom manifested in shared wording. This is evident when the two texts are in different languages (i.e. Arabic and Persian), which is often the case in this study.

1.6. Individual texts of the corpus

In this section, I will present the fourteen individual texts in chronological order and provide, if available, biographical information of the writers, dating of the text in question and other circumstantial information. For instance, some of the texts are commissioned and some are not. I will also describe the content and structure of the texts to the extent necessary to give a general idea of the book. Because the texts are different, I will not follow a strict uniformity in presentation.

In addition, there are other interesting matters that are not always explicitly expressed in the texts. These include the writer's motives, biases, methodological approaches, and the sources used, which are of great importance in this study. As these matters are often implicitly, if at all, touched upon, they are often difficult to grasp. I have tried to elucidate these matters as much as possible based on the previous scholarship and my own observations. At the end of section 1.7, the possible literary sources for the Bahrām Čübīn story are discussed.

1.6.1. Ibn Qutayba's (828–889) *Kitāb al-Ma'ārif*

Although Ibn Qutayba (828–889) was born in Kūfa, his family probably originated from Khorasan (Lecomte, 1971: 844) or Marv (Rosenthal, 1997: 45–47). He served as *qāḍī* of Dīnawar for approximately twenty years from 851 until 870. After this period, he moved to Baghdad where he remained until his death.

According to the biographical data, he was strongly linked to the Persian cultural sphere even though he wrote in Arabic. Rosenthal states that “there is no indication that he was more familiar with Persian than his contemporaries in Iraq, but we have to assume that he knew the language and was able to communicate in it” (Rosenthal, 1997: 45–47). In his book *Faḍl al-'Arab wa-l-Tanbīh 'Ulūmi-hā* or *The Excellence of the Arabs*, Ibn Qutayba provides important information about his antipathies towards Persians and participates in an identitarian debate within the early Abbasid caliphate. The book defends the social prestige of Arabness and expresses contempt for Persians. Ibn Qutayba, however, seems to distinguish between the people of Khorasan and other Persians. He favours the former group and despises the latter (Savant, 2017: xiv–xvi). Ibn Qutayba's position is somewhat ambiguous and therefore noteworthy. He also provides a revealing example of the use of the ambiguous terms *šū'ūb* and *šū'ūbiyya* which are often interpreted self-evidently and tendentiously (Savant, 2017; see 1.4.1).

Ibn Qutayba is primarily known for his philological, theological and *adab* output, not for his historical writings. Of his 16 known authentic books, only *K. al-Ma'ārif* can be partly characterized as historiographical (Lecomte, 1971: 845). In addition to the above-mentioned subjects, he wrote on the lexicography of the Qur'ān and *hadith* as well as on astrology (Lecomte, 1971: 885).

K. al-Ma'ārif is not solely a historiographical book in the conventional sense as many other Arabic *ta'riḫ*-books are. Of its 18 chapters only the author's introduction and five other chapters can be considered historiographical (QT: 66–442; 566–570; 626–666). The rest of the book consists of encyclopaedia-like lists of *hadith* transmitters, famous and noble people, Qur'ān-reciters, transmitters of poetry, and various other subjects such as lists of physically disabled famous people.

In his introduction, Ibn Qutayba himself describes his book as a collection of various information (*al-ma'ārif*) on the most erudite, noble and high-ranking in knowledge and eloquence including people who are known for their chivalry or any other notable things (QT: 1). According to Duri, *al-Ma'ārif* is an encyclopaedia-like manual in which various styles of historical writing are intertwined. Duri also mentions that Ibn Qutayba was the first Arabic historian to consult the Hebrew Bible directly (1983: 67–8). Dating the book is a challenging task. Based on historical figures mentioned in

the book and other circumstantial evidence, 'Ukāša proposes two dates: 869/870 or 879/880 (1960: 22–24).

In the introduction, Ibn Qutayba does not openly discuss his methodology for collecting the information nor his sources. Nevertheless, especially in the sections on the Prophet and his followers and in other chapters, he often gives *isnāds* and generally proceeds according to the conventions of *hadith* literature. However, in the section on the Persian kings, *Mulūk al-'Ajam*, he provides only one *isnād* at the beginning of the chapter after introducing the first Persian king Bahman b. Isfandiyār: “Abū Ḥātim related to us al-Aṣma'ī (d. 828) saying that ...” (QT: 652). Here Abū Ḥātim refers to Sahl b. Muḥammad b. 'Uṭmān b. Qāsim b. al-Sijistānī (d. 869), master in the Qur'ānic sciences, philology and poetry and Al-Aṣma'ī to the famous al-Aṣma'ī 'Abd al-Malik b. Mazīd (d. 828), Arabic scholar and philologist. Interestingly, in the incipit of the same chapter, Ibn Qutayba mentions a source. He states:

I read in the books of Tales of the Persians (*kutub siyar al-'ajam*) that some of the kings who reigned before the princelings (*mulūk al-ṭawā'if*) lived in Balkh of Khorasan, others in Bābil and others in Fārs (QT: 652).

Consequently, a question arises of what *Kutub Siyar al-'Ajam* were. Defining the precise identity of the books is practically impossible given the very scant information. We can only suppose that the title probably refers to an Arabic version or versions of the Pahlavi book of kings, *Khwadāynāmag*, or its derivatives (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 5–9). Indeed, elsewhere in Ibn Qutayba's oeuvre, we encounter titles such as *K. al-Ā'in* and *K. al-Tāj* which are indicative of Persian sources (Rosenthal, 1997: 45–47). It may have been that the author had access to an array of Arabic translations of Persian sources. However, in the above passage, Ibn Qutayba seems to want to impose a categorization according to the geographical location of the kings in Balkh, Bābil, and Fārs. He applies this categorization in the next few pages indicating the king's origin, but for some reason, does not apply this approach further. In the corpus, Ibn Qutayba is an exceptional figure for his contradictory role in transmitting Persian culture by circulating Iranian national history, including the story of Bahrām Čūbīn, and simultaneously severely criticizing the Persians and emphasizing the pre-eminence of the Arabs.

1.6.2. Al-Dīnawarī's (d. ca. 903) *Kitāb al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl*

Abū Ḥanīfa Aḥmad b. Dā'ūd b. Wanand al-Dīnawarī's date of death is subject to some confusion. Yāqūt's *K. al-Irṣād al-Arīb ilā Ma'ārif al-Adīb* and Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist* give four different dates for al-Dīnawarī's death. The year 903 is the latest and a *terminus ante quem* for his death, but the years 894 and 895 have also been suggested (Jackson Bonner, 2015: 25).

Both his *nisba* (*dīnawarī*) and his third name, Wanand, referring to his grandfather, indicate that he was probably of Iranian origin: Dīnawar is a town in modern-day Kirmānšāh, and Wanand refers to a Zoroastrian astral deity. Based on this notion, Jackson Bonner argues that his grandfather probably did not convert to Islam, but his father did, which would make it likely that al-Dīnawarī himself was well informed on pre-Islamic culture and religion (Jackson Bonner, 2015: 25).

His literary and scientific work has for the most part perished; only two volumes of *K. al-Nabāt* and one complete book, *K. al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl*, have come down to us (Lewin, 1965: 300). Nevertheless, *Fihrist* and Yāqūt's *K. al-Irṣād* indicate that he composed on a variety of subjects such as mathematics, logic, astronomy, botany, medicine, flora, geography, philology, Qur'ānic exegesis, law, rhetoric and history (Jackson Bonner, 2015: 26).

K. al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl is a universal history from the Persian viewpoint. It begins with the days of Adam and continues with the chronicles of Persian kings up to Yazdigird III, Yemeni kings, Byzantine kings, Turanian kings, the caliphs of both the Umayyad and Abbasid periods and accounts of famous battles and Arab conquests. Guirgass's edition uses the three extant manuscripts (Kratchkovsky, 1912: 10) and can therefore be considered definitive.

The point of view is often Persian-centred, and, for instance, the prophet Muḥammad is mentioned only in passing in the account of Anūšīrwān (Lewis, 1965: 300). In general, al-Dīnawarī downplays the role of prophets in history and emphasizes a secular Iranian kingship. Almost everywhere in the book he casts Arabs in a bad light, seeing them as conquerors (Jackson Bonner, 2015: 36–7). It should be noted that in addition to the revolts of Bahrām Čūbīn and Bistām, al-Dīnawarī's text evinces a certain interest in other rebellions and insurrections such as those of Anūš Zādh and Bābak (Jackson Bonner, 2015: 26). Stylistically *K. al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl* is a continuous narrative without *isnāds* and does not include alternative narratives of the same account as does al-Ṭabarī's text, for instance.

The sources mentioned explicitly by al-Dīnawarī in the pre-Islamic period are Ibn al-Muqaffa' (DN: 9), 'Abdallāh al-Šāmit (DN: 21), Ibn Kayyis al-Namarī (DN: 9) and Ibn Šarya (DN: 10). In one

instance al-Dīnawarī also states: “This widespread report has been transmitted by narrators (*wa-hādhā ḥadīṭ muntaṣir qad hamalat-hu al-ruwāt*)” (DN: 22), which could refer to an oral source.

Of the above names, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, Ibn Kayyis al-Namarī, and Ibn Šarya draw our special attention because *Nihāyat al-arab*, a book which shares much in content with *K. al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, mentions them as well. Ibn Šarya, also known by the name ʿAbīd b. Šarya al-Jurhamī (Rosenthal, 1986: 937), was a historian who probably lived in the 9th century although there is some confusion about his identity. However, the book *Akhbār ʿAbīd* (Cheddadi, 2004: 36–70; Crosby, 2007) and, according to Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist*, *K. al-Amṭāl* and *K. al-Mulūk wa-Akhbār al-Māḍīn* (Ibn al-Nadīm, 1872: 89) are attributed to him. Crosby has devoted an entire monograph on *Akhbār ʿAbīd* and discusses its dating and authenticity in depth (Crosby, 2007: 51–65). Jackson Bonner attributes al-Dīnawarī's Yemenite material mainly to *Akhbār ʿAbīd* (Jackson Bonner, 2015: 44–5).

Al-Dīnawarī is one of the first identifiable sources to connect Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ with Persian history (Jackson Bonner, 2015: 45). And since Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was the main translator of *Khwadāynāmag* texts into Arabic (see 1.2.3), his appearance suggests that al-Dīnawarī exploited this tradition. Unfortunately, the text does not give further evidence for this.

Jackson Bonner suggests with strong evidence that *Kārnāmag-yi Ardakhšīr-yi Pābagān*, or one of the many mutant versions of it, was al-Dīnawarī's source in the account of Ardašīr I (Jackson Bonner, 2015: 51–3). Despite the lack of explicit references, it is highly possible that al-Dīnawarī drew material from Ibn Ishāq, which can be inferred from parallel material in al-Dīnawarī's and al-Ṭabarī's accounts with the exception that al-Ṭabarī ascribes the account to Ibn Ishāq (Jackson Bonner, 2015: 57). Al-Dīnawarī, as well as the author of the *Nihāyat*, drew from the Alexander Romance translated into Arabic from Syriac or Pahlavi. It is also possible that Anūš Zādh's hagiography and Ibn Hišām's account of Khusraw I's conquest of Yemen were used as sources (Jackson Bonner, 2015: 69–71, 74). According to Jackson Bonner, the book of Bahrām Čübīn (*K. Bahrām Šūbīn*), which, according to *Fihrist*, was translated by Jabala b. Sālim into Arabic (Ibn al-Nadīm, 1872: 305), was probably used as a source as well (2015: 62). In part four of the present study I will discuss the identity of Jabala b. Sālim's book and claim that in addition to it, there were probably many other books in circulation containing material on Bahrām Čübīn. Therefore, there is no way to ascertain whether al-Dīnawarī's source was the book of Jabala b. Sālim or another book.

1.6.3. Al-Ya'qūbī's (d. ca. 905) *Ta'riḵh*

The biographical information on al-Ya'qūbī is scanty. His full name was Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. Abī Ya'qūb b. Ja'far b. Wahb b. Wāḍiḥ al-Ya'qūbī and he was a historian and geographer. In mediaeval texts he was known by many names such as Ibn Wāḍiḥ, Ibn Abī Wāḍiḥ and Aḥmad al-Kātib of which the last (*al-kātib*) indicates that he was a bureaucrat or secretary by profession (Anthony & Gordon, 2018: 14, 16). He appears to have been called *al-Isfahānī* or *al-Kātib al-Isfahānī* too, which suggests that he either resided in Isfahan or that his lineage was from there (Daniel, 2012: 138; Anthony & Gordon, 2018: 14). His religious views were clearly Shī'ite (Gordon, 2018: 3; Anthony & Gordon, 2018: 10). He is thought to have been born in Baghdad on an unknown date and to have spent some time in Armenia in his youth (Brockelmann, 1943: 259) although Anthony and Gordon deem these pieces of information unreliable (2018: 10, n. 7). It seems certain, however, that he travelled widely from an early age and acquired vast professional experience and erudition (Duri, 1983: 64). Apparently, he served under the Ṭāhirid rule in Khorasan before the dynasty's ultimate decline in 872–3. Later he probably moved to Egypt where he served the Ṭulūnid state (Gordon, 2018: 3) and died in the early 10th century, the year 905 or after (Zaman, 2002: 257–8).

Ta'riḵh is one of the three preserved books of al-Ya'qūbī. The two others are *K. al-Buldān*, administrative geography of the lands of Islam, and *Muṣākalat al-Nās li-Zamāni-him* containing anecdotes about the tastes and conduct of caliphs (Zaman, 2002: 258; Gordon, 2018: 6–7). *Ta'riḵh*, in two parts, is considered to be the first extant universal history in the Arabic-Islamic historiographical tradition (Rosenthal, 1968: 133) and it reflects an ambitious cosmopolitan worldview (Gordon, 2018: 4). The first part starts with a presentation of pre-Islamic history and early biblical history followed by a description of the four Gospels and the chronological succession of prominent individuals such as kings and prophets. Al-Ya'qūbī deals broadly with cultural aspects of non-Muslim nations, pioneering in this respect in Arabic historiography (Zaman, 2002: 258). Characteristic of *Ta'riḵh*, in addition to the fact al-Ya'qūbī leaves out the *isnāds* (Khalidi, 1994: 116), is that he also contributed to the development of *adab*-historiography,²⁴ becoming a model for later historians (Zaman, 2002: 258; Khalidi, 1994: 116).

Unfortunately, the author's introductory remarks and the story of the Creation – the very beginning of the first part of the book – are both missing from the two extant manuscripts (Johnston,

²⁴ According to Khalidi, *adab* or *adab*-historiography contrasts with preceding sacred literary traditions such as *hadith* by a more comparative approach to historical reports, a more critical attitude toward histories of foreign nations, the dropping of *isnāds*, and changes in styles and mood and longer continuous narratives (Khalidi, 1994: 124–9).

1957: 189). This lacuna is disturbing since in the second part the sources are indicated in a bibliography, which makes it plausible that al-Ya'qūbī also indicated the sources in the first part.

Regardless of the missing sources in the first part, one can grasp the idea of his methods through other verifiable sources such as biblical references. For instance, his quotations from the books of Kings and Chronicles, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are often very accurate (Adang, 1996: 118–9; Khalidi, 1994: 115). In these references, his sources seem to be based on Syriac versions of the early Christian texts which were translated from the Greek (Adang, 1996: 120). This information shows the scope of al-Ya'qūbī's interest and methodology: if he searched primary, authoritative, and non-Arabic sources for the biblical sections, why should this be different for the chapter on the Persian kings? In the introduction of the second part, which mainly deals with the Prophet, his companions, and the early caliphs, al-Ya'qūbī describes his methodology as follows:

We have composed our book by what the ancient wise men (*al-ašyākh*), scholars, transmitters and masters of the biographies, reports (*akhbār*), and chronicles have transmitted. We do not believe in the particularity of [this] one book we compose and take upon a task [to include in it] what the others before us [have said]. Nevertheless, we have gone through all the treatises and reports since we have found that [the reporters] have disagreements among themselves in their *hadiths* and reports (*akhbār*) in the years and deeds. Some of them are manifold and others incomplete. [Therefore], we want to gather all that is transmitted to us by all the people since one man (*imra'*) does not know all the knowledge thoroughly (YQ II, 2).

The above passage shows al-Ya'qūbī's critical and selective premises. Yet, one should bear in mind that using a critical approach in the second part was more evident, since al-Ya'qūbī's sources were most likely more abundant and in any case, closer to his own time than in the first part. Our concern, the chapter *Mulūk Fāris* in which the traces of Bahrām Čūbīn's story are found, is 21 pages long (YQ: 178–203). In the introductory part of this chapter al-Ya'qūbī reveals his understanding of the sources:

The Persians claim many things about their kings, [perhaps] more than anybody else, as amplification [in their] physical appearances, thus that one of them, [they claim], would have had multiple mouths and eyes, another a face of copper and another two snakes on his shoulders who would eat human brains. [Their] duration of life is extended and [they] would expel death from people, and stories similar to these, which are rejected by the reason and seen

as a jest and fantasy and where there is no truth found. [However], there are always men of reason and knowledge among the Persians, noblemen, of high-ranking families, sons of their kings and grandees, civilized and well read, who do not affirm or advocate these stories (YQ: 178).

This is not an irrelevant anecdote. The man with the two snakes growing from his shoulders is without a doubt the mythical Persian hero ʿAḥḥāk, which indicates al-Yaʿqūbī's familiarity with Persian folklore. Also, the mere fact that al-Yaʿqūbī distinguishes between a mythical "nonsense" and more reliable history shows his critical eye.

1.6.4. Al-Ṭabarī's (d. 923) *Ta'riḥ*

Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī was born 839 in Āmul in the Ṭabaristān region, where he spent his early days; he died in 923 in Baghdad. Al-Ṭabarī was brought up in a Persian-speaking environment, but, as was the scholarly custom of his days, he used Arabic in his works. After leaving his home city at the age of twelve, he received education in various places such as Ray, Baghdad, Kūfa, and Basra as well as Fuṣṭāṭ in Egypt and in Syria and Palestine. Rosenthal gives a thorough survey on the scholars contemporary with al-Ṭabarī who were most probably the earliest authors of biographical accounts on which the existing accounts based their information (Rosenthal, 1989: 5–10).

Al-Ṭabarī's literary production was immense, and he wrote on a variety of subjects, but only a fraction of his writings have survived. The two most famous of his books are the massive *Jāmiʿ al-Bayān ʿan Taʾwīl al-Qurʾān*, a commentary of the Qurʾān known as *Tafsīr* and *Mukhtaṣar Taʾriḥ al-Rusul wa-l-Mulūk wa-l-Khulafāʾ*, known as *Taʾriḥ*, History. Al-Ṭabarī's History, which he completed in 915 (Rosenthal, 1989: 133), is a universal history beginning with the Creation, the Hebrew Bible, the patriarchs, prophets, and rulers of ancient Israel, and the kings of Persia (Bosworth, 2000 b: 13).

One of the main characteristics of *Taʾriḥ* is its use of various and sometimes contradictory versions of the same account. Therefore, al-Ṭabarī leaves it to the reader to decide which of the accounts he desires to follow or give credit to. The question of the sources, whether they were oral or written, is an extremely controversial issue. In al-Ṭabarī's time, historical knowledge was usually transmitted through lectures (aurally), although purely written transmission had become increasingly important (Robinson, 2003: 37; Schoeler, 2006: 30). According to Schoeler, lectures were held by teachers (*ṣuyūkh*) from written notes, which were listened to and written down again by the students (Schoeler, 2006: 45). In the Persian sections, al-Ṭabarī often uses passive verbs such

as *qīla*, "it was said" or *dhukira*, "it was mentioned," which contrasts with the use of cited sources elsewhere in *Ta'rikh*, as al-Ṭabarī usually indicates his sources meticulously (Savant, 2013: 44). Leaving out the *isnāds* certainly reflects the non-religious nature of the sources on pre-Islamic Persia.

Al-Ṭabarī discusses his sources and methodology briefly at the end of the introductory chapter (*khuṭbat al-kitāb*). He states that he relies upon all the related accounts (*al-akhbār*) and reports (*al-āṭār*) that he transmits and attributes them to their transmitters and only exceptionally relies on rational reasoning and independent thinking (ṬB I: 6–7). The exact meaning of the word "*āṭār*" is ambiguous as it could also refer to written works. He also assures the reader that if in his book there is information of unreliable transmitters (*mimmā yastankiru-hu qāri'u-hu*) it is not his fault but goes back to previous transmitters (*wa-innamā utiya min qibal ba'd nāqilī-hi ilay-nā*) (ṬB I: 7).

Al-Ṭabarī's point of view was traditionalist and one of his goals was to facilitate the reception of an Islamic worldview amongst the new converts (Josephson, 2007: 60). The traditionalist approach can be seen, for instance, in an Islamic and *hadith* based framework, which he applies even to the Sasanian sections. Al-Ṭabarī adds, for instance, a chapter on the reasons why God wanted to annihilate the Persian kingdom accompanied by *hadiths* and various Muslim authorities (ṬB I: 1009–1037). On the other hand, he was well acquainted with Persian culture and the language, which can be seen in some quotations of Persian words and explanations of Persian expressions (ṬB I: 995, 1010, 1014).

In the Sasanian sections (ṬB I: 813–966; 981–1067) al-Ṭabarī indicates numerous sources. In these sections, the material on Yemenite and Ethiopian kings is also incorporated, which corresponds to the structure of many other sources such as *Nihāyat* and *Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*. The name of Ibn Hišām is often mentioned but many supplementary identifiable names, amounting to 49, are also given.

Rosenthal argues that al-Ṭabarī's stay in Ray and the encounter with scholars such as Abū 'Abdallāh Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd al-Rāzī (d. 862), al-Muṭannā b. Ibrāhīm and Aḥmad b. Ḥammād al-Dawlābī, a student of Sufyān b. 'Uyayna, had significant influence on his general knowledge of history and taught him about pre-Islamic and early Islamic history (Rosenthal, 1989: 17–18). Yāqūt also states that al-Ṭabarī studied Ibn Ishāq's works *Mubtada'* and *Maghāzī* with the guidance of al-Dawlābī who, in turn, got his information from the earlier scholar Salama b. al-Faḍl (d. 807), judge of Ray, which must have been an essential background regarding his later works on history (Rosenthal, 1989: 18).

In places, al-Ṭabarī also indicates anonymous sources such as: “Some of the scholarly class reported stories of the Persians (*bi-akhbār al-furs*)” (ṬB I: 886), “some of the scholarly class reported stories of the Persians like the story of Fīrūz and the story of Akhšanwār (*dhakara ba’ḍ ahl al-‘ilm*)” (ṬB I: 878), “other than Hišām [al-Kalbī] of the raconteurs of stories said (*qāla ghayr hišām*)” (ṬB I: 873, 1041) and so forth. Al-Mas’ūdī, al-Maqqīsī, al-Ṭa’ālibī and Ibn al-Aṭīr have similar passages.

1.6.5. Al-Mas’ūdī’s *Murūj al-Dhahab wa-Ma’ādin al-Jawhar* (written in 956)

Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Mas’ūdī was born in Baghdad according to his writings. However, his exact date of birth is unknown (Pellat, 1991: 784) but he was probably born around 890. He died in 957 (Pellat, 1991: 785). He was not of Iranian descent but travelled considerably in Persia, India, Egypt, and Armenia and showed great interest in non-Muslim cultures (Shboul, 1979: 1–17).

Al-Mas’ūdī was a prolific writer, and he is known to have written at least 36 books on a variety of subjects such as history, sacred history, the Imamate, religion, religious law, philosophy, and science. In this list, the number of books on history, 12, and sacred history, 4, stands out (Pellat, 1991: 785–7), and for good reason he can be called historian. The two most important of his surviving works in this regard are *K. al-Tanbīh wa-l-Išrāf* and *Murūj al-Dhahab wa-Ma’ādin al-Jawhar*, the work concerning us here.

Murūj is a universal history covering a vast field of knowledge. One can roughly divide the book and its hundred and thirty-two chapters into two parts. The first part deals with the geography of the earth, rivers, seas, climates and different regions of the world but also with the history and ethnology of Persia, biblical histories, Graeco-Roman and other non-Muslim cultures and their kings as well as religious and legendary history. The second part deals with the rise of Islam and Muslim history, and for the most part, is arranged according to the caliphs.

According to some intrinsic references in al-Mas’ūdī’s oeuvre (al-Mas’ūdī, 1893: 97, 111, 155–6, 175–6, 329), it seems that *Murūj* was composed gradually, polished and amended over many years. The first version was produced between 943 and 947 and the last in 956 (al-Mas’ūdī, 1893: 155–6; Pellat, 1991: 785). The extant edition is based only on the early version completed in 947, which is unfortunate because this text was later replaced by a more extensive and detailed version in 956 (Shboul, 1979: 68). In this regard, it is noteworthy that in *K. al-Tanbīh wa-l-Išrāf* al-Mas’ūdī indicates that he added (*wa-qad ataynā ‘alā mā kāna fī ayyāmi-hi*) some material to *Murūj* in 956 and

therefore multiplied its content (*aḍ'āf mā taqaddama min al-nuskha al-mu'allafa fī sana [...]*) (al-Mas'ūdī, 1893: 155–6). Of course, we have no idea of the content of these extended passages.

Fortunately, unlike many other mediaeval Arabic historical texts, al-Mas'ūdī's *Murūj* meticulously indicates in the introduction the sources he exploits (MS I: 12–16). However, the specific use of the sources within the main text is often not indicated, which creates ambiguity in whether or not a particular source contributes, for instance, to the Persian or Sasanian history. The nature of the sources is ambiguous as well: namely, when referring to a person's name one cannot be sure whether al-Mas'ūdī refers to the person's literary works or whether he has received some accounts orally from him. This, of course, is a broader question concerning all mediaeval Arabic sources in general.

The sources which certainly apply to the Persian sections include Ibn al-Muqaffa' (MS I: 13, 17, 89, 229, 267), al-Ṭabarī (MS I: 15); Ibn Qutayba (MS I: 15); Dā'ūd b. al-Jarrāḥ, whose book, according to al-Mas'ūdī, includes many anecdotes about the Persians and other nations (MS I: 14); Abū al-Faraj Qudāma b. Ja'far (MS I: 16); 'Ubaydallāh b. 'Abdullāh b. Khurradādhbih and his big book of Tales of the Persian kings (MS I: 14, 241); Hišām b. Muḥammad al-Kalbī (ca. 737–819/821) (MS I: 12, 118, 275, 278), who relates one genealogy of the Persians (MS I: 275); Abū 'Ubayda Ma'mar b. al-Muṭannā (MS I: 12, 264, 276, 295, 324), who often cites 'Umar Kisrā (Hämeen-Anttila, 2013) as his source. According to Gibb, the latter was responsible for almost half of all the information about pre-Islamic Arabia that was transmitted by later authors (1962: 68).

Other sources which may have contributed to Persian history include Abū al-Sā'ib al-Makhzūmī (MS I: 13), 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Nawfalī (MS I: 13), al-Aṣma'ī (d. 828) (MS I: 13), Damādh b. Rufay' b. Salama (MS I: 13), Ibn al-Waššā' (MS I: 13), 'Abdallāh b. 'Ayyāš al-Hamadānī (MS I: 12), Ibn 'Ā'idh (MS I: 13), Ibrāhīm b. Māhawayh al-Fārsī (MS I: 16), Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā al-Wāsiṭī (MS I: 16), Muḥammad b. al-Ḥārīt al-Taghallubī and his book *K. Akhlāq al-Mulūk* (MS I: 13), Muḥammad b. Abī al-Azhar and his *K. fī Ta'rīkh* (MS I: 16), Muḥammad b. Ishāq (MS I: 12, 69), Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh b. 'Amr b. Mu'āwiya or al-'Utbī al-Amawī (MS I: 13), 'Umāra b. Waṭīma al-Miṣrī (MS I: 13), Wahb b. Munabbih (MS I: 12, 72, 73) whom Rosenthal connects to Yemenite material (1968: 187) and Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. Wāqid al-Wāqidī (MS I: 12).

Al-Mas'ūdī occasionally mentions anonymous books or records he took information from. In the Sasanian section, he states that "I found in some of the chronicles (*wajadtu fī ba'ḍ al-tawārīkh*) that the number of the Sasanian kings ..." (MS I: 323) and "I saw all the reporters (*al-akhbārīyyīn*) and authors of the tales ..." (MS I: 323). What is more, he mentions that the Persians have a separate

book containing the stories of Bahrām Čübīn (*wa-li-l-furs kitāb mufrad fī akhbār bahrām jübīn*) (MS I: 318). According to al-Mas'ūdī, the book deals with Bahrām's ruses (*makāyidi-hi*) in the land of the Turan and his rescuing the daughter of the king of the Turanians from the clutches of a beast called *al-Sim'*, resembling a vast goat (*naḥwa al-'anz al-kabīr*). The beast had carried the daughter away from her neighbourhood when she had gone out for a promenade. This story has echoes of the stories of an ape (*qird*) in *Nihāyat* (NH: 385–6), a beast called *šīrkappī* in *Šāhnāma* (FD VIII: 176–82), and a bear (*khirs*) in Bal'amī (BL II: 1015). Al-Mas'ūdī only rephrases briefly the contents of the book after presenting his Bahrām Čübīn account which shows that he did not use the 'separate book' as his source. He might have seen the book, heard about it or read it but he did not use it for his version of the Bahrām Čübīn story. However, the book existed and the short account al-Mas'ūdī provides seems to be the only description of the book. This book and its implications for the transmission of the Bahrām Čübīn story are discussed in the conclusions (see 4.4).

Al-Mas'ūdī was also well informed on the Persian literature before Islam in general. He mentions books like *Kārnāmag* (*al-kārnāmaj*) (MS I: 289), which may refer to a copy of 'Ahd Ardašīr or Ardašīr's Testament (Savant, 2014: 121), *Avesta* (*al-bastāh*) and *Pazand* (*al-bāzand*) (MS I: 292). In *K. al-Tanbīh* al-Mas'ūdī also mentions books such as *Khudāynāmag*, *Āyīn-Nāma* (*āyīn nāmāh*), *Kahnāma* (*kahnāmāh*) (Mas'ūdī, 1893: 106) and *Letter of Tansar* (Mas'ūdī 1893: 99; MS I: 289).

1.6.6. Bal'amī's *Tārīkhnāma-yi Ṭabarī* (written after 963)

Abū 'Alī Muḥammad Bal'amī (d. 974?) was a son of Abū Faḍl Muḥammad b. 'Ubaydallāh Bal'amī (d. 940). Both the father and the son served the Samanid court as viziers (Khaleghi-Motlagh, 1989). The families of Bal'amī, 'Utbī and Jayhānī were among the handful of families that held the same positions in the vizierate in the 10th century of the Samanid realm (Peacock, 2007: 19). The son, Abū 'Alī, served as vizier under both 'Abd al-Malik b. Nūḥ (r. 954–961) and Maṣṣūr b. Nūḥ (r. 961–976). There are contradictory pieces of information about his death. According to Gardīzī, he died in the month of Jumādā II 363 A.H. corresponding to February-March 974 (1384 (= 2005): 237), while still being employed by Maṣṣūr b. Nūḥ. 'Utbī does not indicate a date for his death but affirms that he was reappointed as vizier by Maṣṣūr in 992 (Khaleghi-Motlagh, 1989), which would set his death about twenty years or more after Gardīzī's date.

Abū 'Alī Bal'amī's only surviving work, *Tārīkhnāma-yi Ṭabarī*, was commissioned by Abū Šāliḥ Maṣṣūr b. Nūḥ. According to the book's Arabic introduction, Bal'amī started to compose the work in 352 AH (= 963) and the same year is indicated by *Mujmal al-Tawārikh* (1379 (= 2000): 180). Niẓāmī

'Arūḍī mentions a book called *Tawqī'āt* attributed to Bal'amī in his Čahār Maqāla, but it is not clear whether the author refers to the father or the son (Khaleghi-Motlagh: 1989).

Tārīkhnāma-yi Ṭabarī deals with history from a Persian point of view starting from the creation of the world and passing through the early prophets Adam, Moses, Joseph and Jonas to arrive, after a short description of *mulūk al-ṭawā'if*, petty kings, at the Sasanian period. After the Sasanian period the text deals with Islamic history, conquests and sacred tradition.

The manuscript tradition of *Tārīkhnāma-yi Ṭabarī* is exceptionally complex and manifold. At least 160 copies are known (Peacock, 2007: 3) which makes it difficult or even impossible to establish the original text. This complexity is due to the book's popularity over the centuries for different audiences and purposes: legitimizing current rulers, teaching the fundamentals of Islam, and attacking heresy (Peacock, 2007: 172). Despite the myriad of manuscripts, Rawšan's edition uses only six manuscripts (Rawšan, 1392: 49–60). Therefore, it does not attempt to solve the enormous textual problems emerging from the excessively vast manuscript tradition – an enormous task indeed. Especially for the study of the Bahrām Čūbīn stories this is a pity, because the few textual variations indicated in Rawšan's edition show that the text continued to be in a state of fermentation and considerable discrepancies can be seen. These changes are not small-scale orthographical variations attributed to the negligence of a scribe, but considerable additions and alterations pertaining to the structure of the text (BL II: 1011–18). Furthermore, one should be aware that the manuscripts Rawšan's edition uses are from the Ilkhanid period (1256–1353) and it is unclear how much material was added after the author completed the work. It may be that we are dealing with a modified version of the text which does not directly reflect the Samanid cultural and political milieu. As a whole, Bal'amī's text cannot be treated as a single and unproblematic text. In this study, however, I will have to limit my scope to Rawšan's edition, which, despite its many defects, is the best available.

Despite the author's claim that *Tārīkhnāma-yi Ṭabarī* is a translation, *tarjama*, of al-Ṭabarī's *al-Ta'rīkh* (BL I: 2), it is not, at least not in the habitual sense of the word. As a whole Bal'amī's text is more concise and omits the *isnāds* and the alternative accounts characteristic of al-Ṭabarī's work, which makes Bal'amī's text, as a whole, considerably shorter. In addition, one can add Bal'amī's strong Iranian tone, which was certainly influenced by the Samanid point of view and emphasized their local identity as Persian Muslims distinct from other Muslims. It would be more fitting to call Bal'amī's text an adaptation or re-creation rather than a translation (see 1.2.2).

Bal'amī also adds his own versions to the accounts, absent in al-Ṭabarī's text, which can be seen, for instance, in the episodes on the Arabs fighting the Khazars (Dunlop, 1960: 984), on Bahrām Čübīn and Gayūmart. Regarding the account of Bahrām Čübīn, there are considerable differences in length, structure and nomenclature (Maristo, 2016: 21). Bal'amī's account on Bahrām Čübīn is longer than al-Ṭabarī's (1.5). In places, Bal'amī openly declares that he adds material to al-Ṭabarī's account and says that "Muḥammad b. Jarīr [al-Ṭabarī] did not tell the story of Bahrām Čübīn completely. I found it more complete in the book of Tales of the Persians and I say ..." (BL II: 764). Similar remarks are reiterated elsewhere in the book (BL I: 132, 152, 342, 637, 679).

The book of the Tales of the Persians (*kitāb-i akhbār-i 'ajam*), mentioned in the above passage, is an unidentifiable source (Peacock, 2007: 90) and it is difficult to judge whether it is a specific book or a generic title. In all probability, many books with a more or less similar title on the history of the Persians or the Persian kings connected with the Khwadāynāmag-tradition circulated in Arabic (Savant, 2014: 123–5; Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 5–9). Many of these books are attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. 756) and some other authors as indicated by Ḥamza Iṣfahānī (Hämeen-Anttila, 2013: 66–7), but none of them are extant.

Bal'amī evokes Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī's *Šāhnāma-yi Buzurg* when he talks about the Creation of the world (BL I: 5). We do not know a book with this exact title by Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī (Rosenthal, 1986: 156), but according to Hämeen-Anttila, even though the title does not quite match the brevity of Ḥamza's *Ta'rīkh Sinī Mulūk al-Arḍ wa-l-Anbiyā'*, there is no reason to suppose another book by him (2018: 64, 129). However, in this book, according to Bal'amī, 'Abdullāh b. Muqaffa' would have said that the duration from the time of Adam, the first man, who was then called Gayūmart, to the Prophet Muḥammad was 6300 or 5900 years. The information is further corroborated by a group of authorities such as Muḥammad b. al-Jahm al-Barmakī, Zādūy b. Šāhūy, Mūsā b. 'Isā al-Khusrawī, Hāšim b. Qāsim Iṣfahānī,²⁵ Zādūy Farrukhān, Persian kings (*pādšāhān-i pārs*) and the books *Nāma-yi Bahrām b. Bahrām* and *Nāma-yi Sāsāniyān* (BL I: 5).

In fact, in *Ta'rīkh Sinī Mulūk al-Arḍ wa-l-Anbiyā'* a similar list is found. Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī mentions four different books with the name Tales of the Persian kings (*kitāb siyar mulūk al-furs*) translated by (*min naql*) Ibn al-Muqaffa', by Muḥammad b. al-Jahm al-Barmakī, transmitted or compiled (*min naql aw jam'*) by Muḥammad b. Bahrām b. Muṭyār al-Iṣbahānī and transmitted by Zādūya b. Šāhūya

²⁵ According to Minorsky, these five names are the persons who related or rearranged the same or similar material as Ibn al-Muqaffa' in his Tales of the Kings (*siyar al-mulūk*), a translation or adaptation of the *Khwadāynāmag* (Minorsky, 1964: 261). For the sources that Bal'amī used, directly or indirectly, this indication is pivotal. Hämeen-Anttila discusses the names thoroughly in the chapter Arabic Translations of the *Khwadāynāmag* (2018 a: 59–130). See also 1.2.1.

al-İşbahānī; two books with the name *K. Ta'riḫ Mulūk Banī Sāsān*, the first transmitted and compiled by Hišām b. Qāsim al-İşbahānī and the second corrected by (*min iṣlāḥ*) Bahrām b. Mardānšāh Mawbad Kūrat Šābūr; and a book called *K. Ta'riḫ Mulūk al-Furs* taken from the treasure house of al-Ma'mūn (Ḥamza al-İşfahānī, 1961: 14). These two lists of authorities are not identical, in fact similar lists are found in four other texts too, but similar enough in order to establish a strong link between Bal'amī and al-İşfahānī's text (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 59–67).

Regarding the above passage there is a striking parallel with the older preface of the *Šāhnāma*. The two paragraphs starting from “*dar šāhnāma-yi buzurg [...]*” and ending with “[...] *mardum būd wa pādšāh nabūd*” (BL I: 5) are almost identical in content with Minorsky's translation's two paragraphs starting with “From the books of Ibn Muqaffa' [...]” up to “[...] and between Jesus and our Muḥammad, God bless him” (Minorsky, 1964: 269–70). The Content and nomenclature are the same except for some minor details and it is therefore obvious that one of the two texts was a source of the other (Rubin, 2005: 62). Since Bal'amī's text is older – Bāysunqūr's manuscript, the same one on which Minorsky based his translation, dates to 1430 (Khaleghi-Motlagh, 1989) – we naturally suggest that Bal'amī's text, or the source Bal'amī refers to, influenced the latter or, in fact, is the same. In the same passage, Bal'amī also states that a report he is about to relate is based on the sayings of the *dihqāns* (*wa-īn guzāriš kih kunīm az guftār-i dihqānān yād kunīm*) (BL I: 5), which strongly suggests an oral source.

An important connection between the Samanid state and Bahrām Čübīn is the fact that Abū Šāliḥ Maṣṣūr b. Nūḥ traced his genealogy to Bahrām Čübīn (BL I: 2). Surprisingly, Maṣṣūr b. Nūḥ was not the only one to claim this descent since the older preface of the *Šāhnāma* indicates that Ibn 'Abd al-Razzāq and Abū Maṣṣūr Ma'marī both traced their lineage back to Bahrām Čübīn (Peacock, 2007: 123; Minorsky, 1964: 271–2).

1.6.7. Al-Maqdisī's *Kitāb al-Bad' wa-l-Ta'riḫ* (written in 966)

Little is known about al-Muṭahhar b. Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī. We do not know the time of his birth nor the date of his death. His name is given by al-Ṭa'ālibī's *Ghurar* (TB: 501) and Huart, the editor of al-Maqdisī's work, first used the name Abū Zayd Aḥmad b. Sahl al-Balkhī (Huart, 1903: V) because this name appeared in some of the manuscripts. It was only later that the name al-Maqdisī was being commonly used.

Al-Maqdisī's only surviving work, *K. al-Bad' wa-l-Ta'riḫ*, which is our concern, was composed in Bust in Sijistan in 966, the date given by the author himself (MQ I: 6). According to Huart, the book

was commissioned by an unknown Samanid vizier (Huart 1901: 20; Anonymous, 1993: 762), even though the text itself refers only to an anonymous person (MQ I: 5). In the book al-Maḡdisī refers to other books written by him such as *K. al-Maʿānī*, *K. al-Nafs wa-l-Rūḥ*, *K. al-Diyāna wa-l-Amāna* and *K. al-Maʿdila*. These books have not come down to us and we know them only by name.

K. al-Badʿ wa-l-Taʾrīkh is a universal history. Questions related to knowing and how to know, in modern words epistemology, occupy al-Maḡdisī's mind remarkably. In the first part of his book questions such as affirming and classifying knowledge, defining different methods for acquiring knowledge, establishing religious truths, confirming the meaning of God's attributes, and the necessity of the Creation predominate. The second part deals with the Creation and the end of the world. In the third part, al-Maḡdisī describes the prophets before Islam and Persian and Arab kings. In the last parts (four, five and six) of the book, he deals with different nations, religions and their customs and Islamic and caliphal history. The history part takes up to fifteen of the twenty-two chapters of the book (Adang 1996: 50). Al-Maḡdisī has a critical, philosophical and in places comparative approach. He seeks to fit Islamic history into a global framework encompassing all available historical sources and known traditions at hand.

Al-Maḡdisī has a positive attitude toward other religions and cultures and he reports widely on the practices of Christian (Adang 1996: 50) and Zoroastrian sects. By his accurate or quasi-accurate quotations one can see his interest in foreign languages such as Hebrew, Syriac and Persian (Hämeen-Anttila 2012: 155–6, 158–9; MQ I: 63). Like al-Masʿūdī, he was active in field work, often used local oral sources and travelled widely to places like Mecca, Bethlehem, and various places in Egypt, Iraq and Persia (Hämeen-Anttila 2012: 151–2). Although he never identifies oral sources by name, he sometimes refers to them by their profession: *hirbadh al-Majūs* (MQ II: 59–60), a man belonging to the Bihāfarīdiyya sect of Zoroastrianism (MQ I: 176), Qarmatians (MQ I: 184), a learned Jew (*rajul min ʿulamāʾ al-yahūd*) (MQ II: 235). He also inquires of his co-travellers (MQ III: 36) and listens to storytellers (MQ III: 81; Hämeen-Anttila 2012: 154–5).

In the introduction, al-Maḡdisī refers to an anonymous person who ordered him (*amara-nī*) to write a book according to certain criteria: "It should not descend from a high position (*munḥaṭṭan ʿan daraja al-ʿulūw*), nor be restricted to abridgements. It should be polished from flaws of embellishments, purified of washerwomen's erroneous tales (*siqāṭ al-ghassālāt*) and superstitions of the old, [purified] of forgeries of the storytellers and topics of the suspicious transmitters" (MQ I: 5–6). It is important to note here, though, that the person is not characterized as a Samanid vizier (Tahmi, 1998: 18). According to certain models and criteria (*imtiṭāl mā muṭila wa arsām mā rusima*),

given by this anonymous person, al-Maḡdisī claims to study the authentic *isnāds*, all-inclusive literary works (*mutaḡammīnāt al-taṣānīf*); he gathers all the accounts of the Creation of the world (*dhikr mubtada' al-khalq*) he can find, the stories of the prophets and the reports of nations, generations and histories of important Arab and Persian kings as well as that which was narrated on behalf of the caliphs from the beginning of time (*min ladun qiyām al-sā'a*) until his own time (*ilā zamāni-nā*) (MQ I: 6). We can glimpse in these statements a brief insight to al-Maḡdisī's methodology. Unfortunately, he does not identify his sources.

In the Persian section (MQ III: 138–173), al-Maḡdisī follows a general structure of the text of presenting the kings according to Persian tradition. He begins by introducing Gayūmart (MQ III: 138), the first man, and his descendants Hūšang, Ḍaḡḡāk and so forth. Then he introduces the Arsacids or the petty kings (*mulūk al-ṭawā'if*) (MQ III: 155), and shifts to the Sasanians. In the Sasanian section (MQ I: 156–173), al-Maḡdisī mentions al-Mas'ūdī al-Marwazī twice (MQ III: 138, 173), a source of whom we know very little (Omidasalar, 2011: 47–8; Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 133). In addition, Huart indicates four other occasions where verses of poetry cited by al-Maḡdisī can be found in al-Mas'ūdī's (see 1.6.5) works, namely in the *Murūj al-dhahab* and *K. al-Tanbīh wa-l-lṣrāf* (MQ III: 145–146, 158, 164, 172). Apart from these explicit and implicit references to al-Mas'ūdī, al-Maḡdisī mentions a poet called 'Adī b. Zayd (MQ III: 172) and Ibn Jahm (MQ III: 173), who was the writer of a short and versified history of the world (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 67–8). Huart also indicates parallels of al-Maḡdisī's text with al-Yāqūt (MQ III: ar. 171), Ibn Hišām (MQ III: ar. 165) and al-Ṭabarī (MQ III: ar. 166).

Al-Maḡdisī's knowledge of Persian can be seen in many passages in the Persian section and he even quotes some verses of poetry in Persian (MQ III: 173). He also mentions having consulted the Book of Tales of the Persians (*qara'tu fī ba'd siyar al-'ajam*) (MQ III: 144), a generic name for a biographical book of the Persian kings. This indicates the use of multiple sources. Later in the book, al-Maḡdisī also refers to *Khudāynāmag* (MQ V: 197). Regarding the Persian passages, Hämeen-Anttila argues that al-Maḡdisī probably quoted directly from a modern Persian text, not from a Pahlavi original or Arabic translation, whereas other authors such as al-Ṭabarī, Ibn Qutayba and Ibn Hišām used a Persian source translated into Arabic (Hämeen-Anttila 2012: 158–9).

Use of multiple sources, albeit implicitly, can be seen in expressions like “some of them claimed” (*wa-za'ama ba'ḍu-hum*) and “some of them hold a view ...” (*wa-'inda ba'ḍi-him*) (MQ III: 139) in the same sentence. However, usually al-Maḡdisī refers to his sources by stating in a passive voice “it was said” (*yuqāla*), “it was reported” (*ruwiya*), “they said” (*qālū*) or “they claimed” (*za'amū*).

Stylistically this resembles al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī who both use similar passive expressions and refer to unknown groups in their Persian sections.

Al-Maḳdisī is often preoccupied with thoughts and definition of prophecy. For instance, he ponders and argues whether persons such as Jamšīd, Ḍaḥḥāk and Āriš could be real prophets or not (MQ III: 141, 142, 143–4, 146). He often compares some events with other events occurring concurrently elsewhere, thus presenting a comparative chronology of the events within his knowledge. Often, he presents Arabs and Persians side by side (Tahmi, 1998: 245). For example, he states that Šāpūr III reigned during the same time as Imru' al-Qays ruled in al-Ḥīra (MQ III: 163) or that Prophet Muḥammad's father 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib was born during Qubādh I's reign (MQ III: 168) and with many similar examples (MQ III: 165, 169, 170, 171, 173).

1.6.8. Firdawsī's (ca. 940–1020) *Šāhnāma*

Abū al-Qāsim Firdawsī wrote the famous Iranian epic, *Šāhnāma*, which is today regarded as the national epic of Iran. He was born in 940 in a village named Bāž in the district of Ṭabarān (Khaleghi-Motlagh, 1999; Shahbazi, 1991: 2) and spent his last years in Tūs where he died in 1020 (Ménage, 1965: 919) or in 1025 (Khaleghi-Motlagh, 1999).

The *Šāhnāma* itself is perhaps the best source on Firdawsī, his life and the genesis of the epic since it includes some personal and circumstantial material. Other sources are often uncritical and contradictory (Shahbāz, 1991:1) but Niẓāmī 'Arūḍī's *Čahār Maqāla*, the earliest secondary source, gives some valuable information (Ménage, 1965: 918). Besides *Šāhnāma*, there are no other complete works known to have been written by Firdawsī except some epic passages and lyric poems prior to *Šāhnāma* of which few have survived (Ménage, 1965: 918).

The *Šāhnāma*, "the book of kings," written in *mutaqārib*-metre, contains about 60,000 couplets and covers Iranian history from the creation of the world to the end of the Sasanian Empire and the arrival of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāš, the Muslim conqueror of Iran. The book is arranged according to the reigns of the kings and contains tales of both mythical and historical kings. It has been purported that he avoided Arabic loanwords and preferred Persian vocabulary on a 'nationalistic' basis (Meisami, 1999: 51), although he never declares that he deliberately minimized the use of Arabic. Moīnfar's study shows that up to 8.8 percent of *Šāhnāma*'s vocabulary, a relatively high figure, was Arabic although the frequency of occurrence is only 2.4 percent (Moīnfar, 1970; Perry, 2005).

Firdawsī's sources are a long-debated topic among researchers. The debate started with Mohl (Mohl, 1838), an early editor and translator of the book and continued with Nöldeke (1920). Scholars

can be roughly divided into three groups (Hassanabadi, 2010: 194): those, like Khaleghi-Motlagh (1372 (= 1993): 32–5; 1386 (= 2007) and Omidasalar (2011: 44–6, 67, 161–6), who advocate that Firdawsī's composition was based on a written source namely the *Khudāynāmag* and its adaptations in Arabic; those, like Boyce (2002), Davidson (1994) and Davis (1996), who incline towards an oral source of ancient minstrels and storytellers; and those, like Shahbazi (1991: 131–4), Šafā (1321: 191–206; 1374) and Bahār (1374), who prefer a synthesis of these two and advocate both written and oral sources. Regarding the account on Bahrām Čübīn, it is clear that Firdawsī used multiple written sources and possibly oral sources as well (see 4.8, 4.9, 4.14).

In the introduction of the *Šāhnāma*, Firdawsī mentions Abū Manšūr Daqīqī (FD I: 13) who had started to compose a similar work. He died at an early age (ca. 975) (Khaleghi-Motlagh, 1999) and Firdawsī continued his work. According to the general interpretation, Daqīqī's source, known as the prose *Šāhnāma* of Abū Manšūr Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Razzāq (Ménage, 1965: 918, Shahbazi, 1991: 69–71), was later transferred to Firdawsī (FD I: 13–14). However, this implies that the notion *nāma-yi pahlawī* (FD I: 13–14), the heroic book, is understood as a reference to the text of Abū Manšūr, an interpretation that can be contested as well. The other two and now lost translations are known to have been *Šāhnāma* of Abū al-Mu'ayyad Balkhī and *Šāhnāma* of Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Balkhī (Ménage, 1965: 918, Shahbazi, 1991: 36). Most scholars take the primary source of Firdawsī to have been the prose *Šāhnāma* and Hämeen-Anttila analyses the evidence of this (2018 a: 145–6, 152–8).

The text contains further indications, often in a chapter's preambles (*āghāz-i dāstān*), which seem to support both oral and written sources: "I heard" (*šinīdam*), "it is narrated" (*riwāyat kardand*), "I saw / read in a book" (*dar kitāb khwāndam / dīdam*) and "someone read from the ancient book" (*bar khwānad az gufta-yi bāstān*) (Hassanabadi, 2010: 196).

Immediately before the Sasanian section, our primary interest, at the beginning of the Parthian section, which covers only two pages, Firdawsī refers to an oral source as an "old reciter" (*surāyanda furtūt mard*) and "a wise man of Čāč" (*dānanda dihqān-i čāč*). Then he addresses him and asks "What was told in that book of the righteous, that one which an orator recollected from the ancient times?" (*či guft andar ān nāma-yī rās(i)tān / ki gūyanda yād ārad az bās(i)tān*) (FD VI: 138). Firdawsī also employs the expression "old wise man" (*dānanda dihqān-i pīr*) (FD VIII: 260) in a similar context. Elsewhere in many other passages in the *Šāhnāma* expressions like *dihqān*, *mōbad*, and *surāyanda*, which are abundant indeed, can be seen as functional equivalents of each other and, according to Davidson, can be considered validators of oral tradition (Davidson, 1994: 35). Boyce also connects

expressions like *rāmišgar*, *khunyāgar*, and *nawāgar* – the latter two do not appear in the *Šāhnāma* – to the old minstrel tradition which, according to her, was still alive in Firdawsī's time (Boyce, 2005: 21, 25, 36). However, Nöldeke and some other scholars have argued that these references are only narrative gestures and do not indicate actual oral sources (Davidson, 1994: 40). Hämeen-Anttila convincingly argues that even though Firdawsī may have used oral sources as additional sources, his main sources must have been written (2018: 153–5). De Blois (1992: 53–8) and Omidšalar (1998) have also provided evidence against the extensive use of oral sources by Firdawsī.

After a short reference to the Parthian period, Firdawsī refers to the period of 'petty kings' (*mulūk-i ʔawāyif*) and enumerates in a few lines some Parthian kings before abruptly stating: "Thus their foundation and origin were so short-termed/ that the experienced man did not tell their stories / I only heard of their names / and in the book of Kings I did not find them."²⁶ Therefore, Firdawsī indicates that his source (*jahāndīda*) did not relate the Parthians' history (*tārīkh-i šān*) and in a seemingly written source (*nāma-yi khusarwān*) there was no mention of them either. What could this *Nāma-yi khusarwān*, "Book of Kings," refer to?

In the preface of *Šāhnāma*, which is often referred to by scholars in order to define Firdawsī's sources, *nāma-yi khusarwān* is juxtaposed with *nāma-yi pahlawī*, a Pahlavi book, and refers to a book brought by a friend to Firdawsī (FD I: 13, n. 14) namely Abū Manšūr's prose *Šāhnāma* (Khaleghi-Motlagh, 1999; Ménage, 1965: 918; Shahbazi, 1991: 69). In fact, the names *nāma-yi bāstān* (FD I: 21; FD II: 308, n. 11, 380; FD IV: 171; FD V: 439; FD VI: 442; FD VII: 427; FD VIII: 259), *nāma-yi pahlawān* (FD VII: 620), *nāma-yi pārsī* (FD VIII: 259), *nāma-yi khusarwān* (FD I: 14; FD III: 305, n. 3; FD V: 439; FD VI: 139), *daftar-i khusarwān* (FD VI: 463) and *daftar-i pahlawān* (FD VII: 409) are functional equivalents of each other and may refer to the book or books used by Firdawsī as sources. Also, the expression *gufta-yi bāstān* (FD I: 164; FD II: 118; FD III: 4, n. 6, 85, 218, 305, n. 7; FD V: 293, 423; FD VI: 432; FD VII: 219; FD VIII: 436), depending on the context, can refer both to an oral or written source.

Firdawsī refers to an oral source in the introductory part to the story of Hurmuzd IV as a governor of the city of Herat, *marzubān-i harī*, and *pīr-i khurāsān* whose name is Mākh (FD VII: 466). This reference is particularly interesting since, in the older preface to *Šāhnāma*, translated by Minorsky (1964: 266), the name is mentioned alongside three other wise men, Yazdāndād, Māhūy Khūršīd and Šādān-i Burzīn, who were summoned by Abū Manšūr Ma'marī, minister of Abū Manšūr 'Abd al-

²⁶ *ču kūtāhi bud šākh u ham bīkh-i šān / nagūyad jahāndīda tārīkh-i šān / azirā juz az nām(i) našnīda am / na dar nāma-yi khusarwān dīda-am* (FD VI: 139).

Razzāq, in order to produce the Book of the kings (Davidson, 1994: 51). In Khaleghi-Motlagh's edition, Šādān-i Burzīn is mentioned in the story of *Kalīla wa-Dimna* (FD VII: 361).

Apart from these, in the sections on the Parthians Firdawsī cites a certain Bahrām (FD II: 199) who, according to Shahbazi (1991: 133, n. 87), was Šāhūy, son of Mardāšāh (FD VI: 176) and Āzād Sarv of Marv (FD V: 439) in the episode on the death of Rustam. The latter was in possession of a copy of the *Khudāynāmag* on which Firdawsī might have based this episode (Shahbazi, 1991: 67). Āzād Sarv was probably not an oral source since he was not contemporary with Firdawsī (Nöldeke, 1930: 29; Shahbazi, 1991: 133, n. 84).

In my opinion, it is highly unlikely that Firdawsī used either written or oral sources exclusively. The time for composing the epic was very long, up to thirty years, and *Šāhnāma* refers to both oral and written sources. Therefore, it is plausible to suggest that he used both.

1.6.9. Al-Ṭa'ālibī's (d. 1038) *Ghurur Akhbār Mulūk al-Furs wa-Siyari-him*

Abū Manšūr 'Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Ṭa'ālibī (961–1038) was born and died in Nīšābūr (Rowson, 2000: 426). He is known as a prolific writer. We know approximately thirty authentic works of his, and the majority of them deal with Arabic literature, philological discussions, poetry, artistic prose and anecdotes of cultural history (Rowson, 2000: 426).

Our concern, *Ghurur Akhbār Mulūk al-Furs wa-Siyari-him*, a universal history, is al-Ṭa'ālibī's only historiographical work. Al-Ṭa'ālibī's literary taste can be seen through multiple citations of poetry; his style is refined and literary. Only three incomplete manuscripts have survived (Zotenberg, 1900: 1). Initially, the book comprised four volumes (Bosworth, 2000 (c): 425). At the beginning of the 20th century, the authorship of the book was contested, and another name was also suggested: Abū Manšūr al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Marghānī al-Ṭa'ālibī. The ambiguity is due to confusion in the manuscripts (Rosenthal, 1950: 181). For our research, the content of the text is more important than the identity of the writer. However, one may note that a comparison of the similarities in the *Ghurur* with other known texts of Abū Manšūr 'Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Ṭa'ālibī, seems to present a valid proof for the authorship of the latter (Rosenthal, 1950: 182; Zotenberg, 1900: 7–9).

The book is dedicated to the Ghaznavid governor of Khorasan Abū al-Muẓaffar Naṣr b. Sebūktigin and must have been composed before his death in 997 or 1021 (Omidasalar, 2011: 52). *Ghurur Akhbār Mulūk* is addressed to elites and commoners, the uneducated (*jāhil*) and Muslims, Arabs and non-Arabs (Khalidi, 1994: 129). Zotenberg has edited, translated and published the Persian sections

of the book under the name *Histoire des rois de Perse* (1900). This section relates the succession of Persian kings from Gayūmart until the end of the Sasanian era and the king Yazdgard III, a structure known from many other texts of the *Khudāynāmag*-tradition relating to the Sasanian kings. The other parts of the book, which remain only in manuscripts, contain the accounts of the prophets and other kings of Israel, Pharaohs, kings of Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Greece, India, the Turks, and China. In the Islamic part, the book relates the life of Muḥammad, and accounts on Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, Barmakides, Ṭāhirids, Samanids, Ḥamdanids, and Buyids until the contemporaries of al-Ṭāʾālibī and the Ghaznavid court.

One crucial aspect of the *Ghurār* is that it was written contemporaneously with Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma* and most probably used the same sources. Therefore, it is curious to juxtapose these two and see how they differ from one another. In his introduction, Zotenberg has made an extensive survey on the content of the *Ghurār*, comparing it with the works of Ibn Qutayba, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, Firdawsī, the annals of Eutychius of Alexandria and *Zubdat al-Tawārīkh* of Ḥāfiẓ Abrū (Zotenberg, 1900: 18–40). In itself, this comparison is highly valuable both for defining the sources of al-Ṭāʾālibī and the way he used them. The comparison shows at least two things: al-Ṭāʾālibī modified and rewrote his sources to fit his literary and stylistic requirements; Al-Ṭāʾālibī and Firdawsī resemble each other and share the same source(s) even though the content varies significantly here and there. Recently Hämeen-Anttila has thoroughly studied the similarities between the two (2018: 149–52) and his conclusions are more or less similar to Zotenberg's: Firdawsī and al-Ṭāʾālibī have a common source, but the latter cannot be completely dependent on the former.

In the text, al-Ṭāʾālibī indicates some of his sources directly, compares them to each other and discusses their validity. Sometimes he mentions alternative versions and refers to an author or book. To give an example, once he considers different renderings of the name of a king Arjāsp (*kharzāfs*, *hazārāsf*, *arjāsf*) and provides three different sources (TB: 263). On another occasion, he offers alternative versions on the lineage of Zarathustra (TB: 257). These sorts of examples are many. Below, I provide the most important of them:

Al-Ṭāʾālibī mentions Ibn Khurdādhbih or his book *K. al-Tāʾrīkh* 12 times (TB: 130–1, 257, 262–3, 378, 444, 458, 486, 556–7, 604) and gives some alternative versions in comparison to his text. Once al-Ṭāʾālibī relates verses of poetry by Bahrām Jūr through an *isnād* related by Ibn Khurdādhbih (TB: 556) including the names Sawwār b. Zayd b. 'Adī b. Zayd *rāwī* of al-Ḥīra, Simāk b. Ḥarb, Ḥammād and al-Ḥaiṭam b. 'Adī.

Al-Ṭa'ālibī mentions once Ibn al-Muqaffa' as the translator of the book *Kalīla wa-Dimna* from Pahlavi to Arabic. He also adds that al-Rūdhakī put the text in Persian verse by the command of Naṣr b. Aḥmad (TB: 632–3). Twice he mentions Ibn al-Kalbī (ca. 737–819/821) relating a story from al-Ṭabarī's book (TB: 22, 256) and al-Ṭabarī alone ten times (TB: 2, 24, 26, 67, 130, 257, 263, 415, 457, 567).

Interestingly, he mentions the author of *Šāhnāma* (*ṣāhib kitāb šāhnāma*) twice (TB: 263, 457) but does not clarify whether he refers to the book of Firdawsī or to a book by someone else. Possible candidates are Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Razzāq, Abū al-Mu'ayyad Balkhī or Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Balkhī (1.6.8 above).

Al-Ṭa'ālibī mentions al-Ma'ūdī al-Marwazī and his Persian book *Muzdawija* twice (TB: 10, 388) and Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī once (TB: 398) in a rather insignificant matter of etymology. Al-Muṭahhar b. Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī's book *K. al-Bad' wa-l-Ta'rīkh* is also mentioned once in the account of Mānī (TB: 501). Al-Ṭa'ālibī also refers once to anonymous chronicles (*kutub al-tawārīkh*) (TB: 399). However, in the account of Bahrām Čübīn (TB: 642–687), al-Ṭa'ālibī indicates no sources.

Al-Ṭa'ālibī once takes a critical stance to his sources and states that he takes no responsibility for the divergences regarding the tales of the kings, their names and the duration of their reigns and assures writing down only those tales that according to him are trustworthy (TB: 458). This elucidates al-Ṭa'ālibī's critical use of sources and the fact that he used various sources side by side. At the least, he used al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Khurdādhbih extensively.

1.6.10. *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Akhbār al-Furs wa-l-'Arab* (anonymous, written ca. 1000–1050)

The book called *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Akhbār al-Furs wa-l-'Arab* is an intriguing text not only because it includes a long and detailed account on Bahrām Čübīn, but because its writer is unknown and its dating uncertain. The text is rare, and only five manuscripts are known: one in Cambridge University Library, two at the British Museum, one in Gotha and one in Tehran.²⁷ Unfortunately, the only available printed edition, Dānišpažūh's edition, uses only one manuscript and cannot be considered to be a critical one. The manuscript used by Dānišpažūh was copied by a certain Faṭḥullāh for the

²⁷ Cambridge: Burckhart MS; British Museum: Qq 225, Arabic Catalogue pp. 418 and 581, Add. 18 505 and Add. 23 298; Gotha: A. 1741; Tehran: Dānišpažūh's edition refers to the manuscript superficially stating in the introduction: "It is worth mentioning that the edition of Muḥammad Taqī Dānišpažūh of the present work is based on the manuscript found in the University of Tehran."

library of Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sayyid Muḥammad Abū al-Ṣafā in the middle of Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1024 AH which equates to AD 1615 (NH: 473).

The text has been debated among scholars since Theodor Nöldeke commented superficially on it, describing it as an arbitrary recension of al-Dīnawarī's text but, at the same time, admitting that regarding Bahrām Čübīn it had a significantly fuller source than al-Dīnawarī (1879: 475–6). One must understand that Nöldeke's interest in his *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden* was a historical one and because he considered the text unreliable, it had no 'historical' value. Therefore, he dismissed the text as a whole.

Grignaschi dealt with the book and its Persian translation, *Tajārib al-Umam fī Akhbār Mulūk al-'Arab wa-l-'Ajam* (Anonymous, 1373)²⁸, in two articles (1969, 1974). In the first article, Grignaschi compares *Nihāyat*'s content with Ibn Faḳīh al-Hamadhānī's *K. al-Buldān*, written in 902–3, Abū al-Faḍl Bayhaqī's (995–1077) *K. al-Maḥāsīn wa-l-Masāwī* and al-Dīnawarī's *K. al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl* (written before 902–3), all of which share in content with the *Nihāyat*. Based on this, he claims that *Nihāyat*'s text preceded all three texts (1969: 19, 20, 39; 1974: 86, 88). Nevertheless, Grignaschi does not present a coherent theory or conclusive proof and all of these claims can be explained by common sources. In fact, Grignaschi considers the latter possibility (1969: 29, 34, 39), but he prefers the idea of the *Nihāyat* being the oldest, which is not by any means an incumbent conclusion. Despite the subjectivity and in places inconsistent argumentation, Grignaschi's articles include interesting comparative material worthy of consideration, which places the text in a broader context.

Hämeen-Anttila argues that instead of having one source such as an Arabic translation of *Khwadāynāmag*, *Nihāyat*'s author probably used many independent works known to have been translated into Arabic as separate books. According to him, the original text or texts concerning Persian kings has to go back to the 9th or the 8th century and the material on the Sasanian period is accurate enough to eliminate the possibility of fictive fabrications (2018 a: 89–99).

The text itself presents a fake framework of its genesis in the introduction claiming that the Abbasid caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd (766–809) requested al-Aṣma'ī (d. 828) to add to a book, referred in the text as *Tales of the Kings (siyar al-mulūk)*, the histories before Shem the son of Noah (*Sām b. Nūḥ*) beginning from the times of Adam (NH: 1). Hārūn al-Rašīd further suggests that al-Aṣma'ī

²⁸ *Tajārib al-Umam fī Akhbār Mulūk al-'Arab wa-l-'Ajam* is a rare text and the story of Bahrām Čübīn in it (1373: 318–340) is an abridged version of *Nihāyat*'s text with some orthographical changes. As the version does not bring anything new to the content of the story, it is excluded from the corpus.

would ask help from Abū al-Baḥtarī, the jurisconsult (d. 815–6) (Browne, 1900: 197). The name might also be read Abū al-Bakhtarī in which case it could refer to another person, namely to a certain Wahb b. Wahb Abū al-Bakhtarī (NH: 1). Then, the text presents this added section, which includes the stories of the creation, Ādam and Ḥawwāʾ (Adam and Eve), Mablāʾīl, Idrīs and Nūḥ the prophet (NH:2–17) and it is related by Abū al-Baḥtarī and various other authors such as ʿAṭā (NH: 2, 3), al-Šaʿbī (NH: 2, 3, 17), Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 686–8) (NH: 2, 3), and Sufyān (NH: 3). Browne also indicates Ibn Bardīl and Ibn al-Kalbī (ca. 737–819/821) (Browne, 1900: 198), but Dānišpažūh’s edition does not mention them.

When this added section is drawn to its end, the text reverts to the introduction explaining the overall content of the book. It relates the accounts of the past kings including three groups or categories: the tyrants (*al-jabābirat*), the Yemeni kings (*al-tabābiʿat*) and the Persian kings (*al-akāsirat*). According to the text, they are written (*wa-kāna alladhī allaḥa wa-ṣannaḥa ḥādhā al-kitāb wa-nassaḥa-hu*) and made complete by trustworthy oral lectures (*wa-atamma naẓma-hu samāʿan ʿan al-ṭiqāt*) by three authorities ʿĀmir al-Šaʿbī (d. between 721 and 728), Ayyūb b. Qirriyya (d. 703–4) (NH: 17) and ʿAbdallāh b. al-Muqaffaʾ (d. 756). According to the text, the one who brought these men together and commissioned the work (*jamaʿa-[h]um li-dhālika*) was ʿAbdulmalik b. Marwān (d. 705) in the year 85 (AH) which equates to AD 704 (NH: 17). One can see, by juxtaposing the aforementioned dates of death, that this introductory framework is a fabricated anachronism. One could claim, at the most, that if Ibn Marwān commissioned the work, al-Šaʿbī and Qirriyya worked together as they were contemporaries, but including Ibn al-Muqaffaʾ and al-Baḥtarī in the same group is impossible because they are much younger. In general, Ibn Qirriyya and ʿĀmir al-Šaʿbī are associated with transmitting Yemenite material (Rosenthal, 1968: 187).

The books of Tales of the Persians (*kutub siyar al-mulūk min ʿajam*) and Ibn al-Muqaffaʾ reading them are mentioned once as a source at the beginning of an account on Farrukhān b. Āfarīn b. Ašna b. Sābūr b. Adharwān (NH: 159). Ibn al-Muqaffaʾ also uses the formulae “I found in the books of the Persians (*wajadtu fī kutub al-ʿajam*)” (NH: 82), “I found in the book of Tales of the Kings (*wajadtu fī kitāb siyar al-mulūk*)” (NH: 216), and “I found in the book of Tales of the Persian Kings (*innī wajadtu fī kitāb siyar mulūk al-ʿajam*)” (NH: 324). There are also more references to a book of biographies of Persian kings with or without Ibn al-Muqaffaʾ associated with it (NH: 85, 328, 336). The most cited authors include ʿĀmir al-Šaʿbī and Ibn al-Muqaffaʾ, the only sources given for the passages about the Persian kings.

The introduction of the *Nihāyat*'s Persian translation *Tajārib al-Umam fī Akhbār Mulūk al-'Arab wa-l-'Ajam* contains a similar pseudohistorical framework as the original text mentioning 'Āmir al-Ša'bī, Ayyūb b. Qirriyyat, 'Abdallāh b. al-Muqaffa', Hārūn al-Rašīd, and al-Ašma'ī. According to the text, the book was at first in the library of the Abbasids from where it found its way to the library of Sa'd b. Zangī (1197–1226), where it was deposited for three years, after which Zangī asked a translator, anonymous in the text, to translate it into Persian (Anon. *Tajārib al-Umam*, 1373: 35). If we trust in this introduction, it will provide Zangī's death as the *terminus ante quem* for when the translation was made. Of course, this dating would not provide any scope for estimating how long before this the original text was composed.

The dating of the text has been a challenge. Edward Browne indicated that a passage of the text would signify that the Ziyārid dynasty (931–1090) was still in power when the book was composed (1899: 52). Unfortunately, he did not refer to a page, describe the passage, or elaborates on the matter. Following the ideas of Nöldeke, Browne also stated that the text did not fulfil his expectations and was of lesser 'historical' value than he thought (1900: 258). Browne also made a first attempt to compare al-Dīnawarī's and *Nihāyat*'s texts, which apparently have much in common. He concluded that the two were probably not directly linked but perhaps shared a common source (1900: 258). Based on Browne's conclusions, Christensen approximated the text to have been written in the first half of the 11th century (1936: 65). Otakar Klima reiterates this assumption and indicates the years 1000–1050 (Klima, 1957: 17). In this study, I argue that the *Nihāyat* is a multi-layered work having influences from different texts and time periods (4.7). It seems, however, impossible to date the text reliably without historical references to the context of the text's composition (except for the fake historical framework). Had I had the opportunity to consult the manuscript Browne had used and verified the references to the Ziyārid dynasty, the situation would be different. The text really needs a new and better edition. Devoid of any information to prove the contrary, I follow Browne, Christensen, and Klima in that the text was composed approximately 1000–1050. However, this should be considered a preliminary and uncertain dating.

The inconsistency and anachronisms of the *Nihāyat*'s introduction do not mean that the content is entirely worthless. As Grignaschi (1969: 15) and Browne (1900: 200) indicated, fabricated frameworks for literary purposes and to assure a broader circulation are not unheard of. *Nihāyat*'s historical value concerning the Sasanids and other Persian dynasties might not correspond to other historical sources, but its historiographical value in comparative research, which is our concern, is indeed noteworthy.

1.6.11. Gardīzī's *Zayn al-Akḥbār* (written before 1052)

Practically nothing is known of Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Ḥayy b. al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Maḥmūd Gardīzī except that he worked in the mid-11th century. His *nisba* shows that he came from Gardīz, situated in modern east Afghanistan.

Zayn al-Akḥbār, written in the reign of the Ghaznavid Sultan ʿAbd al-Rašīd (r. 1049–52), is the only known text by Gardīzī and only two incomplete manuscripts are extant (Barthold, 1965: 978). Gardīzī's writing style is concise and colourless, and he omits legendary and mythical content (Meisami, 1999: 69). He registers the dry facts often without description and uses tables when presenting series of dignitaries, caliphs or kings.

Zayn al-Akḥbār is divided into two major parts: a historical part and the part describing religious festivals of Muslims, Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, and Hindus, both spread across 15 chapters. The book begins with the creation of the world and humankind. Then Gardīzī presents the prophets from Adam to Abraham and Jesus to Muḥammad before the Chaldean kings (*mulūk kaldāniyān*). Next, Gardīzī presents four classes of Persian kings before Islam: Pīšdādiyāns or the first kings of Persia from Tahmurāsb to Tahmāsb, the Kayanids, 'petty kings' (*mulūk al-ṭawāyif*) and the Sasanians or in Gardīzī's text Persian kings (*akāsirah*) beginning with Khusraw Anūšīrwān. Then Gardīzī presents Islamic caliphs up to the Abbasid caliph al-Qā'im (d. 1075) (GD: 155), leaders of Khorasan, the Samanid dynasty and accounts related to Maḥmūd Ghaznawī (d. 1030).

Gardīzī does not usually indicate his sources, but on one occasion he mentions having consulted Abū al-Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī (973–1048) regarding Kashmirian festivals (GD: 362–3). Al-Bīrūnī, as well as probably Gardīzī, worked under the auspices of the Ghaznavid court. Al-Bīrūnī dedicated one of his books, *al-Qānūn al-Mas'ūdī*, to the Ghaznavid sultan Mas'ūd (998–1040). Since they share the same intellectual background and most probably were contemporaries, they could have met. According to Barthold, one passage might indicate that Gardīzī was a pupil of al-Bīrūnī (1965: 978).

Gardīzī also mentions the Samanid vizier Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Jahānī and possibly his lost *K. Tawārīkh* in the chapter on the Samanid ruler Naṣr b. Aḥmad (GD: 219–20). Bosworth believes that Gardīzī used al-Jahānī's text on the cultural-historical sections (Bosworth: 2000 a). Bosworth also deems it possible that Gardīzī used the lost *Ta'rikh-i Wulāt-i Khurāsān* of Abū Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad Sallāmī Bayhaqī in the section on the Ṣaffārids and Samanids and *Mazīd al-Ta'rikh fī Akḥbār Khurāsān* for the later Samanid history (ibid.).

Gardīzī's otherwise succinct style becomes richer and more descriptive in the Samanid period and exceptionally detailed in the downfall of the Samanid dynasty. The emphasis tells something

about the author's interests and perhaps the audience's expectations. Gardīzī is concerned about the theme of loyalty, and he is critical towards those who break the bond of royal loyalty (Meisami, 1999: 78).

1.6.12. Ibn al-Balkhī's *Fārsnāma* (written in 1116)

Little is known about the writer of *Fārsnāma*, a local history and geography of the Fārs province. Ibn al-Balkhī, the name given to the writer, is only a conventional name based on the fact that the writer identifies himself as having originated from the city of Balkh (*balkhī niẓād-ast*) (BKh: 3). However, the historical context is somewhat clearer since the introduction indicates that the book was commissioned by the Seljuq sultan Ghiyāṭ al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 1118) (Bosworth: 1997). The book must have been composed before the year 1116 since it mentions Atābak Fakhr al-Dīn Čāwli Saqā' ū (d. 1116) still living in that year. In the introduction, Ibn al-Balkhī also writes that he knows both the past and present affairs of the province (BKh: 3). One can assume that the writer was probably a vizier, high bureaucrat, or litterateur close to the Seljuq court. *Fārsnāma* is the earliest surviving historiographical book of the Seljuq period (Meisami, 1999: 162).

Fārsnāma is divided into two major parts: a historical and a geographical section. The historical section is divided into four different periods according to a conventional classification of the kings: legendary kings (*pīšdādiyān*), Kayanids, Parthians and Sasanians (BKh: 8). Curiously, the writer has chosen a double structure presenting two parallel chapters of each of these four periods. In the first set of chapters (BKh: 9–26), the description is succinct and limited to the names of the kings and a short description and dating of their life if the data is available to the writer. For instance, the writer situates the later Sasanian kings such as Anūšīrwān b. Qubād and Khusraw II according to the life of the Prophet Muḥammad and his actions (BKh: 23–4). In the second set of chapters (BKh: 26–113), Ibn al-Balkhī is more detailed and descriptive. For example, in the first instance, the writer dedicates only five lines to Khusraw II (BKh: 24), whereas on the second occasion he writes eight pages on him (BKh: 99–108). This curious structural choice is not explained. After the historical section, the writer inserted a short chapter on the Islamic conquests of Iran by the Arabs (BKh: 113–120). Then, Ibn al-Balkhī moves on to the geographical, meteorological, natural, economic and ethnological description of the different parts of the Fārs province (BKh: 120–172). It seems that the text was driven by the concept of promotion of local identity.

In the introduction, Ibn al-Balkhī explains his motives for writing the book. According to him, Ghiyāṭ al-Dīn Muḥammad is desirous of knowledge about the province of Fārs, its past kings, their

lives, old and current laws, customs and the kings' subjects, as well as the flora and fauna of the region (BK^h: 2–3). What is more, it seems that the broader purpose of the book is to integrate Persian history into the Islamic historical framework. This becomes obvious through two *hadiths* and three Qur'ānic verses cited in the introduction (BK^h: 5–8). Ibn al-Balkhī's interpretation of the verses is rather imaginative and tendentious.

In the first case (Qur. 17:5), he explains that the Jews, to whom, according to him, the verse refers, would have been brought through the lands of Persia during the reign of the Turanian king Luhrāsb (BK^h: 5–6). According to the second interpretation of the same verse, the destiny of the Jews is linked with the Parthian king Gūdarz (*gūdarz-i ašghānī*) who is sent by divine decree to seize Jerusalem from the Jews (BK^h: 6). In the second case (Qur. 48:16), the writer interprets that the great military might (*qawm-in ulī ba's-in šadīd-in*) refers to the Persians army. In the third case (Qur. 105:4), he calls for the correct interpretation of the verse, attributing it to the phonological differences between the Arabic and Persian languages, claiming that the word "*sijjīl*" in the verse is, in fact, of Persian origin, composed of two words, "*sang*" and "*gil*", but due to phonological differences between the Arabic and Persian languages, it has been mistakenly written "*sijjīl*". The two *hadiths* reverently speak about the Persians. One of the *hadiths* juxtaposes faith and the Persians: "If religion were hung from the Pleiades, the Persians could reach it." Curiously, Ibn Qutayba in his *Faḍl al-'Arab wa-l-Tanbīh 'Ulūmi-hā* refers to the same *hadith* to underline the position of the Persians, or more precisely the people of Khurasan, in the sacred history of Islam (Savant, 2017: xv). All of these examples serve to elucidate the presence of the Persians in the Qur'ānic as well as in the Islamic sacred history.

Ibn al-Balkhī indicates some of his sources at the beginning of the book. He mentions Ḥamza b. al-Ḥusayn al-Isfahānī, the *Ta'riḫ* of al-Ṭabarī, other writers of chronicles (*ašḥāb-i tawārīkh*) whose names, he states, are not mentioned because it would take too much space, as well as trustworthy Arab and Persian chroniclers without specifying their identities (BK^h: 8). He also makes reference to *K. Zand* on four occasions (BK^h: 49, 50, 62, 128).

It is also noteworthy, that, when introducing the Sasanians, Ibn al-Balkhī specifies that Bahrām Čübīn and Šahrbarāz cannot be counted among the Sasanian kings because they were rebels (BK^h: 19). Therefore, he takes a stance on the legitimacy of Bahrām Čübīn as ruler.

1.6.13. *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh wa-l-Qiṣaṣ* (anonymous, written in 1126)

Mujmal al-Tawārīkh wa-l-Qiṣaṣ is a general history by an anonymous writer in Persian. Given the prominence of the accounts related to Hamadan, the author may have originated from there (Riedel & Siegfried, 2012). The author dates the work in the year 520 (AH) in the reign of the caliph Mustaršid (r. 1118–35) which corresponds to the year 1126 (MJ: 9). There are four known manuscripts of the text dating from the 15th and 16th centuries in Paris, Berlin, Dublin, and Heidelberg (Riedel & Siegfried, 2012).

The book is divided into 25 chapters. The first eight chapters deal with lists of historical kings and caliphs. Chapters nine and ten deal with Iranian history before Islam, the chapters from eleven to eighteen deal with the history of the Turks, Indians, Romans, Jews, and Arabs. The nineteenth chapter, which is the longest, covers the events after the arrival of Islam from the year one to the year 520 AH. Chapter twenty deals with the sultans in Islamic times, chapter twenty-one with the titles of the kings and chapter twenty-two covers tombs and sarcophagi. Chapters twenty-three and twenty-four deal with geography and twenty-five with the eminence of Islam. The last chapter is indicated in the author's table of contents (MJ: 7) but missing in the manuscripts.

The writer of *Mujmal* describes his intentions and sources well compared to other texts of the corpus. He wishes to gather all the scattered information concerning the Persian kings, their lineages and biographies. Then he lists his major sources including Ibn al-Muqaffa' and Ḥamza b. al-Ḥasan al-Iṣfahānī (MJ: 2), whom he considers best preserve the Sasanian chronicles (MJ: 10). He agrees that many books he is citing are inconsistent with each other (*hič muwāfiq yikdīgar nīst*), but he will present them in such a manner that none of the intentions (*maqṣūd-hā*) of the sources are kept hidden (MJ: 3). This is an important note to understand how the writer proceeds. On another occasion, the writer reveals his methodological ideas:

In this collection of genealogies, there are some other traditions (*riwāyāt*), which we did not write down because they are far from the truth or absurd as much as the practices of the fire-worshippers. Or because the transmission has errors or they have been circulating a very long time and being subjected to errors. (MJ: 38)

At least twice the writer refers to sources that can be interpreted as oral. First, he wants to clarify some accounts (*ba' dī sukhan-hā*) that have been uttered allusively (*bar sabīl-i ramz*) (MJ: 3). Second, he states that in his book not a single oral account is dismissed (*hič sukhan farū nagudhāštam*) (MJ: 8). Indeed, oral interpretation is granted if we agree that the word *sukhan* refers to oral utterance.

Interestingly, *Mujmal*'s writer also explains the genesis of his book and refers to a notorious man present in Asad-Ābād with whom he collaborates at first. This man would ask the writer all about the knowledge concerning the Persian kings and then they would write two or three rolls of text *extempore* while drinking some wine (*bar sar-i šarāb*). *Mujmal*'s writer would then consider the project more seriously, put more effort into it and start composing the text by himself (MJ: 8).

Mujmal's writer is also aware of the possible emendations over time since he cites an unknown astrologer Abū Mu'šir who states that most of the chronicles are corrupt (*fāsid*) because of time lapsed and languages mixed with each other which has led to divergences in content. In addition, the transmitters have made mistakes (MJ: 9–10). He also considers the influence of the different calendars and astrological practices on the divergences in the lengths of kings' reigns and the duration of the world found in different sources (MJ: 11). In the same vein the writer comments on the diversity of the sources:

Be aware that in these chronicles (*ta' rīkh-hā*) there are many traditions (*riwāyāt*) and that every group and sect has composed its own version (*maqālatī*). No one has resolved these contradictions, and for no one has the truth become evident. God knows best the details in this matter (MJ: 9).²⁹

Mujmal indicates a fair amount of its sources. The text gives the following names of authors and books in the relevant chapters 1–10 (MJ: 1–97) on the Persian kings: Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma*³⁰ which, in the introduction of *Mujmal*, is associated with other books of the collection including *Garšāsf-nāma* of Asadī Tūsī (MJ: 2, 3), *Farāmarz-Nāma*, *Akhbār-i Bahman*, and the story of *Gūš Pīl Dandān* (MJ: 2); Al-Ṭabarī's *Ta' rīkh al-Rusul wa-l-Mulūk*³¹; Ḥamza b. al-Ḥasan al-Iṣfahānī's books, which, according to the author, have been narrated by Muḥammad b. Jahm al-Barmakī, Zādūya b. Šāhūya al-Iṣfahānī, Muḥammad b. Bahrām b. Maṭyār al-Iṣfahānī, Hišām b. al-Qasam, and Mūsā b. 'Īsā al-Kisrawī³²; Ibn al-Muqaffa' and his book *Tales of the Persians* (*siyar al-'ajam*) with some orthographical variations (*siyar al-mulūk*, *kitāb al-siyar* etc.)³³; Bahrām b. Mardānšāh Mu'abbad Šāpūr and his book *K. Tārīkh-i Pādīšāhān*,³⁴ *K. Šūrat-i Pādšāhān-i Banī Sāsān* with some

²⁹ A similar passage to warn of the inaccuracy of the Persian sources is found in Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī's *Kitāb Ta' rīkh Sanī* (1961: 9).

³⁰ MJ: 2, 3, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 41, 43, 58, 61, 63, 65, 66, 83.

³¹ MJ: 2, 23, 26, 27, 28, 31, 40, 44, 47, 64, 68, 71, 83.

³² MJ: 2, 8, 10, 22, 27, 47, 50, 51, 60, 65, 67, 85, 88.

³³ MJ: 2, 8, 32, 33, 63, 72, 81, 95, 96.

³⁴ MJ: 2, 21, 32, 39, 58, 65, 83, 84.

orthographical variations such as *K. al-Ṣuwar* (MJ: 33, 34, 35, 37, 94); *Pīrūz-Nāma* (MJ: 37, 66, 70, 80); Abū al-Muʾayyad Balkhī and his books *Akhbār-i Narīmān*, *Sām*, *Kay-Qubād*, *Afrāsiyāb*, *Akhbār-i Luhrāsf*, *Āghaš Wahādān* and *Kay Šikan* (MJ: 2, 3); *K. al-Hamidān* (MJ: 56, 70) of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿĪsā al-Kātib al-Hamidānī; *Taʾrīkh-i Kay Bahman* (MJ: 29) which is probably the same as *Akhbār-i Bahman*; *Iskandar-Nāma* (MJ: 31); *Taʾrīkh-i Sīstān* (MJ: 34); *K. al-Maʿārif* of Ibn Qutayba (MJ: 71); anonymous *K. ʿAjāʾib al-Dunyā* (MJ: 75); and traditions narrated by Ibn al-Miqsam, ʿAṭā, Šaʿbī and Dafghal (MJ: 29).

The text often indicates the plurality of the sources by expressions like “according to another tradition (*riwāyat*)” or something similar (MJ: 24, 32, 38, etc.). Generic expression such as “in other books” (*digar kutub*), “in some book” (*čand kitāb*), “all traditions” (*hama riwāyat*), “in an old book” (*dar kitābī kuhan*), or “the Persians say” (*pārsiyan gūyand*) are also manifold (MJ: 28, 29, 58, etc.).

Riedel and Siegfried (2012) have identified many other sources elsewhere in the book. Perhaps the most interesting of these is al-Yaʿqūbī's *K. Taʾrīkh* (MJ: 229, 271, 278), which is included in the corpus of the study at hand. However, according to the findings of this study, *Mujmal*'s writer does not use *K. Taʾrīkh* in the Persian sections relevant to the present study.

1.6.14. Ibn al-Aṭīr's *Kitāb al-Kāmil fī al-Taʾrīkh* (written before 1233)

ʿIzz al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Aṭīr was born in 1160 and died in 1233 (Rosenthal, 1971: 724). He was born in the town Jazīrat Ibn ʿUmar on the banks of the Tigris north of Mosul. His family was rather wealthy, and his father worked as an administrative official for the Zangid dynasty. He probably worked most of his life as a private scholar (Robinson, 2003: 180). Ibn al-Aṭīr had two brothers: Majd al-Dīn (d. 1209), an official and writer on philology and religion and ʿIyāʾ al-Dīn (d. 1239), a politician, statesman, and literary critic.

Ibn al-Aṭīr was close to Nūr al-Dīn Arsalān Šāh (d. 1211), the Mosul vizier Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAlī b. Jamāl al-Dīn, and the Zangid court in general. Later in his life, he had as patrons Badr al-Dīn Luʾluʾ (d. 1259) in Mosul and Šihāb al-Dīn ʿUghrīl at Aleppo (Richards, 2008 a: 1). Badr al-Dīn Luʾluʾ is also mentioned in *al-Kāmil fī al-Taʾrīkh*'s introduction (Aṭ: 8). The Zangids represented a continuity of the Turkmen-Seljuq collective familial sovereignty (Heidemann, 2002: 452), which might have contributed to Ibn al-Aṭīr's interest in Persian history. As we know, the Seljuqs were keen transmitters of Persian material in the historiographical works they produced, including Ibn al-Balkhī's *Fārsnāma* and the anonymous *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh wa-l-Qiṣaṣ*. Although Ibn al-Aṭīr presents some Persian words and explanations of Persian names, it is doubtful whether he knew Persian (Richards, 1982: 88).

In addition to *al-Kāmil fī al-Ta' rīkh*, Ibn al-Aṭīr wrote *al-Ta' rīkh al-Bahīr fī al-Dawlat al-Atābiyya*, a panegyric monograph on the Zangid dynasty; *Usd al-ghāba* on the Prophet's companions and *al-Lubāb fī Tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, which is based on Abū Sa'd Sam' ānī's *K. al-'Ansāb* (Micheau, 2011: 82–3).

Al-Kāmil fī al-Ta' rīkh is an extensive general history containing 11 volumes in 'Abdallāh al-Qāḍī's edition (1987–2003), and the writer worked on the book over the course of years, possibly decades (Robinson, 2003: 184). The scope of the historical knowledge enclosed in it is vast, in Ibn al-Aṭīr's words, to the extent that never before has one gathered in one book such an amount of information (AT: 6; Richards, 1982: 90). *Al-Kāmil*'s style is fact-based and historical. The writer is more concerned with the essence of meaning than artistic and effective language; substance prevails over the form.

Ibn al-Aṭīr aims at an annalistic and chronological presentation, which he affirms in the introduction (AT: 7). However, he is unable to achieve this goal throughout the book. Especially in the beginning of the book, which contains the Persian sections (AT: 15–388), he presents a more flexible approach and presents chapters organized by the early prophets such as Adam, Seth, Isaac, and Moses. In between, the writer inserts legendary Persian kings such as Tahmūraṭ, Jamšīd, Ḍaḥḥāk, and Afrīdun. In these sections, he aims at a chronological presentation although the years are not mentioned. The Islamic prophets and Persian mythology are thus presented interwoven, which makes it difficult to analyse them separately (see 1.4.4).

Ibn al-Aṭīr explains his motives in the introduction. He desires to present a balanced history of both the Islamic East and West and claims that previously both sides have neglected the historical accounts of the other (AT: 6). Ibn al-Aṭīr affirms that his book is based on al-Ṭabarī's *Ta' rīkh*, the trusted book (*al-kitāb al-mu'awwal*), to which he may have added or removed some small details. In addition to al-Ṭabarī, the writer says to have used a number of other celebrated histories (*al-tawārīkh al-madhkūrāt*) and famous books (AT: 6–7) which are not identified in the text. It is clear that Ibn al-Aṭīr draws copiously on al-Ṭabarī's *Ta' rīkh* except that he eliminates poetry and glosses from difficult passages (Robinson, 2003: 98–9). However, scrutiny reveals that the author must have had other sources besides al-Ṭabarī. For instance, in the chapter dealing with Hurmuzd IV's reign, Ibn al-Aṭīr inserted an anecdote starting with the phrase "*maḥāsīn al-siyar ...*" which is absent in al-Ṭabarī's text (AT: 365–6). This insertion, which appears in the account on Bahrām Čübīn, is the most significant difference between al-Ṭabarī's and Ibn al-Aṭīr's accounts on Bahrām Čübīn; otherwise, they are not identical but resemble each other considerably. Ibn al-Aṭīr's version can be characterized as a compressed version of al-Ṭabarī's text. This close affinity with al-Ṭabarī makes the

inclusion of al-Aṭīr's text in the corpus an equivocal case: it does not contribute much to the understanding of the origins of Bahrām Čūbīn's story but speaks to the ambiguous identities of books, authors and stories in mediaeval Arabic and Persian historiography.

In the introduction, Ibn al-Aṭīr also explains that he started composing the book but put it aside for reasons he does not explain in detail (Aṭ: 7). The writer also refers to a group of knowledgeable and wise men who helped him revise the book, which indicates that some accounts may have been orally added and modified (Aṭ: 7–8).

While Ibn al-Aṭīr relies heavily on al-Ṭabarī, some of the other sources such as Ibn 'Abbās, 'Ikrima mawlā Ibn 'Abbās (d. 686–8) and Hišām b. al-Kalbī (ca. 737–819/821) are also indicated in the book. However, sources indicated in the Persian sections (Aṭ: 15–388) are less frequent. Below I have gathered the few names and books mentioned in the text which relate to the Persian material:

Al-Ṭabarī³⁵ and Hišām b. al-Kalbī³⁶. The text mentions the books of Tales of the Kings (*kutub siyar al-mulūk*) once (Aṭ: 227), and Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī is also mentioned once but not related to Persian matters (Aṭ: 259). According to Cahen, Ibn al-Aṭīr used the lost work *Mašārib al-Tajārib* of Ibn Funduq as a source in his *K. Kāmil fī al-Ta'rikh* (Cahen, 1962: 59–78).

The Persians' point of view is given in various places,³⁷ for instance, when discussing the identity of Adam and whether or not he should be identified with Gayūmart (Aṭ: 41–2). The Persian point of view is also strongly present in the chapter on Seth in which his identity is equated with the legendary Persian kings (Aṭ: 43–4). Sometimes Ibn al-Aṭīr also gives a dating for concurrent reigns of Persian kings when discussing pre-Islamic prophets such as Moses, Isaac, and Jesus (Aṭ: 126, 152, 212, 234). At the very beginning of the book, he presents the Islamic, Jewish and Persian points of view on the duration of the world (Aṭ: 15–17, 212).

Use of multiple sources, although implicitly, can be seen in expressions like “the learned men disagree” (*ikhtalafa al-'ulamā'*), “others say” (*qāla ākharūn*) and “someone of the learned men says” (*qāla ba'ḍ ahl al-'ilm*). The expression “God knows best” (*allāh a'lam*) is often found and expresses the writers' uncertainty about which of the presented versions is the most reliable one (Aṭ: 49, 227, 301, etc.). A different number of regnal years for the same king are given in the Sasanian section, which could indicate the use of multiple sources too (Aṭ: 301, 312, 314, 339).

³⁵ Aṭ: 15, 17, 42, 51, 312, 315, 325, 326, 327.

³⁶ Aṭ: 43, 49, 51, 59, 126, 127, 128, 225, 315, 339.

³⁷ Aṭ: 41–2, 49, 50, 52, 58, 59, 60, 64, 126, 189, 226, 227, 236, 293, 308, 325. The Persians' point of view is often expressed through phrases such as ‘the Persians claimed ...’ (*za'ama al-furs*) or ‘The learned of the Persians claimed ...’ (*za'ama 'ulamā' al-fars*).

Ibn al-Aṭīr's attitude towards the Persians is somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, he narrates and accepts their alternative versions, but on the other hand he criticizes and rejects them in places, calling their accounts superstitious fables (*khurāfāt*) or otherwise untrustworthy (AṬ: 54, 89, 127). A similar attitude is seen in al-Ṭabarī's text as well.

1.7. Possible literary sources for the Bahrām Čübīn story

According to al-Mas'ūdī, the Persians had a 'separate book' containing the stories of Bahrām Čübīn (*wa-li-l-furs kitāb mufrad fī akhbār bahrām jūbīn*) (MS I: 318). Except for al-Mas'ūdī, no other text in the corpus mentions source(s) on Bahrām Čübīn stories directly. For example, *K. Bahrām Šūbīn* indicated by Ibn al-Nadīm is not mentioned in the corpus at all. Al-Mas'ūdī's 'separate book' and short description of it are essential references in this study. It should be stressed that the identity of the book is unclear: al-Mas'ūdī's book and *K. Bahrām Šūbīn* might or might not be the same book. But as the evidence in chapters 4.1–4.14 shows that the extant recensions are based on multiple source texts, most likely the two books are not the same. To recapitulate, we do not have any textual evidence about how, where and when the writers got their information about Bahrām Čübīn. This is by no means surprising since in general mediaeval Arabic and Persian authors seldom indicated their sources on pre-Islamic Persian material and if they do, they only cite the ultimate authority, not the book where the information was found (see 1.2.2).

In addition to the two book titles on Bahrām Čübīn mentioned above, there might have been other Arabic and Persian texts relating the stories or part of them. The writers of the corpus cited some of their written sources which are included in the following list. Some of these books might have transmitted the stories of Bahrām Čübīn too:

Chart 2.

Name of the book in the text	Reference	Full name, identification and complementary notes
<i>al-kitāb al-kabīr fī al-ta'rīkh, aḥwā li-akhbār al-umam wa-mulūk-hā wa-siyar-hā min al-a'ājim</i>	MS I: 14, 241	Book of 'Ubaydallāh b. 'Abdullāh b. Khurradādhbih
<i>āyīn nāmāh</i>	al-Mas'ūdī, 1893: 106	<i>Āyīn-Nāma</i>
<i>daftar-i khusarwān</i>	FD VI: 463	A title that might refer to Firdawsī's source.
<i>daftar-i pahlawān</i>	FD VII: 409	A title that might refer to Firdawsī's source.
<i>khudāy-nāma</i>	MQ V: 197; al-Mas'ūdī, 1893: 106	Refers to the Middle Persian original <i>Khwadāynāmag</i> or the Arabic translation(s) or versions of it.
<i>k. akhlāq al-mulūk</i>	MS I: 13	Book of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥārīṭ al-Taghallubī.

<i>k. al-bad' wa-l-ta'riḵh</i>	ṬB: 501	A book associated with Al-Muṭahhar b. Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī.
<i>k. al-dawla</i>	MS I: 13	Book of Muḥammad b. al-Hayṭum b. Šabbāba al-Khurāsānī.
<i>k. al-ta'riḵh</i>	ṬB: 130, 262, 604	Book of Ibn Khurdādhbih.
<i>k. muḥṣad fī akhbār bahrām jūbīn</i>	MS I: 318	The book of Bahrām Čūbīn indicated by al-Mas'ūdī
<i>k. siyar al-mulūk, k. siyar mulūk al-'ajam, kutub al-'ajam, kutub siyar al-mulūk min 'ajam</i>	NH: 82, 85, 159, 216, 324	"Books of Tales of the Persian kings". <i>Nihāyat</i> refers to Ibn al-Muqaffa' reading these books. The titles refer to the Arabic translation(s) and versions of the Middle Persian <i>Khwadāynāmag</i> or unauthored collections ("source books") on the Persians.
<i>k. akhbār-i 'ajam</i>	BL II: 764	"Books of Stories of the Persians". The title refers to the Arabic translation(s) and versions of the Middle Persian <i>Khwadāynāmag</i> or unauthored collections ("source books") on the Persians.
<i>k. šurat-i pādšāhān-i banī sāsān</i>	MJ: 37, 66, 70, 80	Written also as <i>K. al-šumar</i> .
<i>k. ta'riḵh</i>	MJ: 229, 271, 278	A book associated with al-Ya'qūbī.
<i>k. ta'riḵh-i pādīšāhān</i>	MJ: 2	A book associated with Bahrām b. Mardānšāh Mu'abbad Šāpūr.
<i>kutub al-tawāriḵh</i>	ṬB: 399	"Books of histories", an unspecific nomination for a group of books.
<i>kutub siyar al-'ajam</i>	QT: 652	"Books of Tales of the Persians". The title refers to the Arabic translation(s) and versions of the Middle Persian <i>Khwadāynāmag</i> or unauthored collections ("source books") on the Persians.
<i>kutub siyar al-mulūk</i>	AṬ: 227	"Books of Tales of the Kings." The title refers to the Arabic translation(s) and versions of the Middle Persian <i>Khwadāynāmag</i> or unauthored collections ("source books") on the Persians.
<i>nāma-yi bāstān</i>	FD I: 21; FD II: 308 n11, 380; FD IV: 171; FD V: 439; FD VI: 442; FD VII: 427; FD VIII: 259	Titles that probably refer to Firdawsī's written sources.
<i>nāma-yi khusrawān</i>	FD I: 14; FD III: 305 n3; FD V: 439; FD VI: 139	
<i>nāma-yi pahlawān</i>	FD VII: 620	
<i>nāma-yi pahlawī</i>	FD I: 13 n14	
<i>nāma-yi pārsī</i>	FD VIII: 259	
<i>nāma-yi sāsāniyān</i>	BL I: 5	A title that might refer to Bal'amī's source.
<i>šāhnāma</i>	ṬB: 263, 457	Al-Ṭa'ālibī refers two times to "the author of <i>Šāhnāma</i> " (<i>šāhib kitāb šāhnāma</i>) speaking. As al-Ṭa'ālibī worked contemporaneously with Firdawsī and the book of the latter was probably not in wide circulation in al-Ṭa'ālibī's time, he probably refers to the author of the prose <i>Šāhnāma</i> .

<i>šāhnāma</i>	MJ: 2, 3, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 41, 43, 58, 61, 63, 65, 66, 83	A title that probably refers to <i>Šāhnāma</i> of Firdawsī.
<i>šāhnāma-yi buzurg</i>	BL I: 5	Possibly a book by Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī. May refer to Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī's book <i>Ta'rik Sinī Mulūk al-Arḍ wa-l-Anbiyā'</i> .
<i>siyar al-'ajam</i>	MJ: 2, 8, 32, 33, 63, 72, 81, 95, 96	"Tales of the Persians". The title refers to the Arabic translation(s) and versions of the Middle Persian <i>Khwadāynāmag</i> or unauthored collections ("source books") on the Persians.
<i>siyar al-'ajam</i>	MQ III: 144	"Tales of the Persians". The title refers to the Arabic translation(s) and versions of the Middle Persian <i>Khwadāynāmag</i> or unauthored collections ("source books") on the Persians.
<i>siyar al-mulūk</i>	NH: 1	"Tales of the Kings [of the Persians]". The title refers to the Arabic translation(s) and versions of the Middle Persian <i>Khwadāynāmag</i> or unauthored collections ("source books") on the Persians.
<i>ta'rikh</i>	Bkh: 8	A book associated with al-Ṭabarī.
<i>ta'rikh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk</i>	MJ: 23, 26, 27, 28, 31, 40, 44, 47, 68, 71, 83	A book associated with al-Ṭabarī.

In the above list, the generic book title "Tales of the Kings / Persians ..." (*siyar al-mulūk*, *siyar al-'ajam*, etc.) is mentioned many times. According to Rosenthal, *siyar* is a literary genre which 'deals with the novelistic biography of historical or pseudohistorical heroes or peoples.' (1968: 188). Here the title presumably refers to the Arabic translation(s) and versions of the Middle Persian *Khwadāynāmag*. Hämeen-Anttila argues that the original *Khwadāynāmag* was probably a rather dry and succinct collection of the lists of Sasanian kings without any narrative motif and most probably did not contain material of Bahrām Čübīn or any other stories that circulated as independent books (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 223–8). However, the titles refer to the translations of the original, not to *Khwadāynāmag* itself. Therefore, it is possible that the contents of the "Tales of the Persians" were modified and changed over time. Bahrām Čübīn stories might have slipped in.

As we know, copying, transmitting and translating a book in the mediaeval Arabic and Persian context had a very different meaning than it has today. It is likely that the additions and deletions accrued over the centuries resulted in a book or set of books that were inconsistent with the first translations. Other related Persian material such as the stories on Bahrām Čübīn might easily have slipped in. This is a speculative but plausible course of events. In the context of medieval Islamic

texts, it is often difficult to define the authorship of a given text and the content can also be inconsistent (Leder, 1988; Günther, 2002; Schoeler, 2006: 37; Hämeen-Anttila, 2016).

Savant postulates an interesting and fresh new theory about the sources on pre-Islamic Iran. She suggests that unauthored collections or “source books” (*majmū‘āt* in Arabic) could have served as a source of Persian material. These collections were made by librarians or manuscript sellers who bind together topically related material or different books of the same author. Savant gives four examples that she labels as such collections: Hamza al-Iṣfahānī mentioning “more than twenty” copies of the *Khudāynāmag* by the Zoroastrian priest Bahram; the Pahlavi *Letter of Tansar* and its Arabic translations; a manuscript that contains four works pertaining to Ardašīr; a codex containing thirty short Pahlavi works. What is more, she argues that phrases such as “the Persians say” or “the Persians claim” could refer to these collections instead of oral sources (2014: 123–5). I find this idea appealing and it could give another meaning to the works named *siyar*. Indeed, the names such as *kutub siyar*, *kutub siyar al-‘ajam* and *kitāb-i akhbār-i ‘ajam* tally well with the idea of unauthored collections.

In light of the textual evolution of the stories on Bahrām Čübīn, one cannot ignore the growing influence of *Adab* on the historical writing which began in the course of the 9th century. In the literary context, *Adab* designates moral and intellectual education and refers to various texts of this sort. It contrasts with preceding sacred literary traditions such as *hadith* by a more comparative approach to historical reports, a more critical attitude toward histories of foreign nations, dropping of *isnāds* and changes in styles and mood and longer narratives (Khalidi, 1994: 124–9). All of these features can be observed in the texts of the corpus. Al-Dīnawarī’s *Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl* and al-Ṭa’ālibī’s *Ghurar* in which long continuous narratives, drama and wisdom, dialogue, speeches, letters, poetry and elegant language preponderate are cases in point. The *Adab* influence is important for our study in two ways: When the stories – including Bahrām Čübīn accounts – were edited and rewritten, the main characteristics of the source texts faded out, which on the one hand resulted in a new version of the story, proper to the author, and on the other, blurred the connection with the source text. In other words, literary connections, verbatim or otherwise, became more difficult to identify. These influences on the written versions of Bahrām Čübīn stories are discussed further in the conclusions (4.15).

Part II – Method and Narrative Motifs

2.1. Methodological observations

Part two has two objectives: to discuss the method and describe the general narrative outline of Bahrām Čübīn stories. This study is first and foremost a literary study. The method undertaken is a comparative narratological analysis based on literary analysis and narrative motifs. One may call it forensic or even mathematical as the narrative motifs are used as a tool to corroborate or refute connections. Especially in part IV, numbers and sequences of narrative motifs play an important role. Essential information, however, derives from literary analysis in part III. As far as I know, a method comparable to this has not been followed in the scholarship of Arabic and Persian historiography. Christensen (1907) dealt with the story of Bahrām Čübīn based on many texts included in the corpus but, for the reasons discussed above (1.3.4), I find his analysis preliminary.

Comparative literary analyses of short accounts and common themes have been used in the studies of Islamic historiography. Leder (1990), for example, compares the accounts of al-Balādhurī's *Ansāb al-Ašraf* and al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'riḫ* on the downfall of the Umayyad governor Khālīd b. 'Abdalāh al-Qasrī and considers carefully the wording, representation of the dialogue and the narrative structure of the texts. Leder also discusses the transmission and divides the text into sequences and episodes that remotely resemble the narrative motifs of this study (1990: 76–83). Lindstedt analyses the traces of al-Madī'īnī's *K. Dawla* found in the texts of Ibn A'tam, al-Ṭabarī and al-Balādhurī based on detailed literary analysis. He deals with al-Madā'īnī's sources, transmission and literary themes (Lindstedt, 2017). Noth and Conrad analyse early Arabic historiography of the first 30 years after Muḥammad's death and divide the corpus into topoi such as 'arranging the succession of command,' 'appointing deputies,' 'war elephants,' 'the thousandman' and many others (Noth, 1994: 109–172). The obvious difference regarding our study is that Bahrām Čübīn stories combine a rather small corpus whereas Noth and Conrad deal with a vast number of authors and a *mélange* of texts. Meisami deals with Abū-Muslim Khurāsānī's murder in the texts of Bal'amī and Gardīzī (2012: 35–42) and the murder of a vizier, a popular topic in Arabic and Persian historiography, in the texts of Bal'amī, Bayhaqī and Rāwandī. Melville undertakes a similar literary analysis on broad themes such as 'Civilian Casualties' and 'The ruler at war' (2012 b: 73–98). Nevertheless, the above-mentioned articles and books and the literary analysis in them have little in common with what I intend to do in part III.

Outside of Islamic historiography studies, there are many scholarly approaches that should be noted. Vladimir Propp's classic *Morphology of the Folktale* (1968) originally published in 1928 laid the ground for structural analysis of folktales. Propp analysed a limited corpus of Russian fairy tales

starting with the smallest narrative units. William Petersen's comprehensive study of *Tatian's Diatessaron* (1994) – a gospel harmony from the second century – its creation, dissemination and significance uses a vast number of manuscripts of different languages and describes the texts travels from one geographical place to another through the centuries. Regarding the multitude of sources and contexts, Petersen's study has a certain remote resemblance to this study.

The idea of using forensic narrative analysis combined with literary analysis was not influenced by any of the above-mentioned articles or any other single study. Rather it emerged gradually when reading the accounts over and over again. I noticed the complexity of the matter and wanted to analyse the content exhaustively and accurately. I tried to apply a method which is both transparent and rigorous, pertinent and, hopefully, applicatory in other studies.

2.2. The method and research questions

In this study, the literary analysis is based on three concepts: narrative block, narrative motif and topos. Narrative blocs refer to 'large themes' proper to Bahrām Čübīn stories. Each narrative block contains from seven to twenty-seven narrative motifs. The word topos is used conventionally to refer to literary topoi (recurrent themes or topics in literature) in the same vein as Noth (1994) and Meisami (1999).

I employ the expressions "Bahrām Čübīn stories" instead of using "Romance" or "Bahrām Čübīn story", for a simple reason. The word "Romance" implies a single original version of the story. We are dealing, however, with the translations and recensions of the original versions. Given the scattered and heterogeneous nature of the Arabic and Persian recensions, it is more accurate to speak about the stories in the plural rather than give an idea of one "Bahrām Čübīn Romance."

Furthermore, any attempted reconstruction of the *original* version would be a hazardous if not an impossible task since both the Middle Persian original and the first Arabic translation(s) are irretrievably lost. All one could possibly achieve is to estimate which narrative motifs were *probably* included in the original versions. But this is very different from reconstructing *the original* version.

A corpus-based approach has its limits and benefits. The obvious challenge of presenting material from multiple sources is that the contexts behind the texts are multiple. In the analysis of one manuscript tradition instead, for instance, that of al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rikh*, all the texts are (hopefully) reducible to one origin. More variables entail more complex analysis. Establishing an original version is, at least in this study, not possible. On the other hand, a plurality of perspectives can be a good thing too. One is not obliged to fit different narratives together and to explain their differences if it

is not likely that they derive from the same textual tradition. It is possible that a version is non-dependent of any other text of the corpus. Another benefit of the corpus-based approach is that we can try to establish the chronological evolution of the story and see, for example, whether or not the material has accrued and the story has grown in details over time. This can also be done with texts of the same textual tradition but to a lesser extent if it is supposed that the texts derive ultimately from the same author.

The narrative motifs serve as a basis for comparison and analysis. Occurrences of the motifs help us map changes and connections within the story. However, there is a challenge in this procedure: If text B has used narrative motif "Y" from an earlier text A, we can assume that B depends on A or that they have a common source. But, if text B has not used the narrative motif "Y" from A, we cannot be sure whether the writer has deliberately dismissed the "Y", or used a completely different source. Conversely, absence of the narrative motif "Y" in text B does not automatically mean that B has not used the earlier source A. Many of the writers probably used more than one source. That is why this type of evidence is only referential, not conclusive.

Consequently, solely comparing the narrative motifs does not provide sufficient information to understand the complex dependencies between the texts. The content of the narrative details should be analysed carefully too. To give an example, the narrative motif "The Arabs help Khusraw II and his troops on their way to Byzantium" (V /k) appears in seven versions, but in each of them the content is radically different (see 3.3.1). Similar examples are manifold. Therefore, a closer look is a necessary requirement for full understanding of the connections between the texts.

In the literary analysis, important turning points of the narration such as the reasons for Bahrām Čūbīn's revolt, the conditions of his death and comments on the legitimacy of royal power might reveal the writers' tendencies and help to determine whether or not a given pair of texts have a connection. This type of evidence connects the texts. Cumulative evidence of this kind helps us draw conclusions about whether a given pair or group of texts has a strong or weak dependency. In any case, cumulative examples of dependency or non-dependency yield stronger evidence than infrequent similarities because all the versions share the content to some extent.

Occasionally, names of individuals and places can be an important feature of comparison. As the versions differ in length, they also differ in the nomenclature: longer versions contain more nomenclature. Because the name for one and the same individual can vary considerably, comparing nomenclature helps us recognize different lines of transmission and dependency. To give some examples: Khāqān III's name is either Barmūda / Parmūda etc. or Yaltakīn / Yartaghīn; Hurmuzd IV's

vizier bears the names Yazdān Bakhšiš, Yazdān Jušnas, Āyīn Gušasp and Arīkhsīs al-Khūzī; Khāqān IV's first brother is known as Yafāris, Baghāwīr, Yabghū, Maghātūra, Baghrūn and the second brother is known as Naṭrā, Tuburg, Bartagh, Yartagh; a monster that Bahrām Čūbīn fights in the land of the Turanians has four different descriptions in different texts. These name patterns can provide significant evidence to determine connections or disconnection between the texts. One should, however, be careful because these differences can be either orthographic, semantic or differences in pronunciation. A general index of nomenclature is found in the appendices (see Appendix B).

In addition, the chronological order of the texts is kept in mind throughout the study. This means that in the charts and elsewhere in the text, the order in which the sources are presented follows the chronology established in the introduction (1.6). However, one must proceed with qualifications. There is a possibility that the writer of a later text might have used an older text as a source. Therefore, the date of writing, if known, can be only allusive to the date of composition of the material under scrutiny. Of course, every text is different, but mediaeval historiographical texts are often layered and mosaic-like. Indeed, this is the case with the corpus at hand.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to answer the following questions: How are the texts linked together? What sources did the fourteen Arabic and Persian texts use? How were the stories of Bahrām Čūbīn transmitted? What can explain the diversity of the versions? Why did the Bahrām Čūbīn story continue to appeal to the writers? What characteristics did the stories of Bahrām Čūbīn have in the beginning? Answering these questions provides information on how the Persian material circulated and how mediaeval authors worked their material. In the conclusions, based on the findings of this study and the previous scholarship, I try to explain the diversity of materials on Bahrām Čūbīn. All the translations from Arabic and Persian are mine.

2.3. Narrative motifs in the Bahrām Čūbīn story

After a long but necessary introduction, we can finally focus on the stories of Bahrām Čūbīn. As discussed above, narrative motifs play a pivotal role in the analysis. I have identified them by reading the texts carefully through several times. The major narrative outline of the story imposes self-evident units (i.e. seven narrative blocks), but identifying smaller narrative motifs has required close reading and comparing with other texts. Identifying some narrative motifs requires interpretation since they are presented differently in different texts. Longer accounts such as Firdawsī and al-Dīnawarī may contain even more narrative motifs than listed below but if they are absent in other

texts, they are devoid of comparative value³⁸. Therefore, the choice of narrative motifs represents a careful balance between the most frequent or self-evident narrative units and some rare narrative motifs that exist only in a few texts, which contributes to the understanding of rich variety of the stories of Bahrām Čübīn.

The story is divided into seven narrative blocks and each of them contains from seven to twenty-seven smaller narrative motifs. The total number of narrative motifs amounts to 104. Appendix A provides detailed information on how the narrative motifs are distributed in the corpus.³⁹

Narrative block I: Introducing Bahrām Čübīn

- a) Mihrān-Sitād tells an anecdote of Hurmuzd IV's mother at the court of Khāqān I
- b) External forces threaten Hurmuzd IV's kingdom
- c) Hurmuzd IV chooses Bahrām as leading general for his army
- d) Bahrām and 12,000 men
- e) Hurmuzd IV discusses Bahrām's trustworthiness with his vizier
- f) Hurmuzd IV sends a man after Bahrām
- g) Bahrām piercing sheep heads with his sword
- h) Hurmuzd IV asks Bahrām to return, but he refuses
- i) Bahrām's soldier assaults a woman

Narrative block II: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khāqān II

- a) Hurmuzd IV sends a man to Khāqān II
- b) Letter from Khāqān II to Hurmuzd IV
- c) Exchanging messages between Khāqān II and Bahrām
- d) Bahrām has a dream
- e) Bahrām makes war against Khāqān II
- f) Bahrām kills Khāqān II with an arrow
- g) Bahrām captures and kills a Turanian magician

Narrative block III: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khāqān III

- a) Bahrām Čübīn inspects Khāqān III's troops before the fight
- b) Khāqān III inspects Bahrām's troops before the fight
- c) Bahrām makes war against Khāqān III
- d) Surprise attack in the garden by Khāqān III
- e) Exchange of words between Bahrām and Khāqān III

³⁸ Firdawsī has long sections absent in other texts: letter of Bahrām to Khusraw II (FD VIII: 125–6), many details before Bahrām's death (FD VIII: 190–201), destruction of the city of Ray after the death of Bahrām (FD VIII: 233–9) and many other embellishments and smaller additions.

³⁹ As Appendices A includes charts that indicate the page numbers in the original texts, it is intended for a reader who wants to scrutinize the narrative elements up close. Difficulties in establishing some of the narrative elements are manifested in the footnotes of that section.

- f) Khāqān III entrenches himself in a castle
- g) Khāqān III asks for asylum from Hurmuzd IV
- h) A reference to the legendary Turanian kings
- i) Khāqān III and Hurmuzd IV meet outside the royal palace
- j) Hurmuzd IV praises Bahrām for his victories or sends him gifts
- k) A conflict between Bahrām and Khāqān III

Narrative block IV: Revolt of Bahrām Čübīn

- a) Khāqān III denounces Bahrām's actions to Hurmuzd IV
- b) Hurmuzd IV's vizier intrigues against Bahrām
- c) Hurmuzd IV sends insulting gifts to Bahrām
- d) Bahrām revolts against Hurmuzd IV
- e) Historical account cited by Bahrām's men
- f) Hunting wild ass episode
- g) Bahrām ascends the throne
- h) Khurrād-Burzīn and the scribe (often Yazdak) flee
- i) Khurrād-Burzīn informs Hurmuzd IV about Bahrām's actions
- j) Bahrām sends insulting gifts to Hurmuzd IV
- k) Hurmuzd IV sends the insulting gifts back to Bahrām
- l) Bahrām discusses the legitimacy of kingship with his men
- m) Bahrām Čübīn deems Khusraw II a better ruler than Hurmuzd IV
- n) Bahrām mints coins in the name of Khusraw II
- o) Khusraw II flees to Azerbaijan
- p) Hurmuzd IV sends his vizier to Bahrām to apologize
- q) Hurmuzd IV is blinded and dethroned

Narrative block V: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khusraw II

- a) Khusraw II meets Hurmuzd IV after his dethroning
- b) Hurmuzd IV makes requests to Khusraw II
- c) Khusraw II sends one of his generals to inspect Bahrām's troops
- d) Bahrām and Khusraw II meet at the Nahrawān River
- e) Exchange of words (insults) between Bahrām and Khusraw II
- f) Bahrām and Khusraw II fight for the first time (Khusraw II is defeated)
- g) Khusraw II shoots an arrow at the horse of Bahrām Čübīn
- h) Hurmuzd IV advises Khusraw II to seek help from Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines
- i) Hurmuzd IV is killed by Bistām and Bindūy
- j) Bahrām Siyāwuš chases Khusraw II into a monastery
- k) Bahrām Siyāwuš and Bindūy plan the assassination of Bahrām Čübīn
- l) Assassination attempt of Bahrām on the polo field
- m) Khusraw II writes to Maurice or otherwise seeks help from him
- n) The Arabs help Khusraw II on his way to Byzantium
- o) Prophecy of a Christian monk

- p) Maurice discusses the situation at his court
- q) Maurice sends his son, a general or an army to help Khusraw II
- r) Maurice gives his daughter Maryam as wife to Khusraw II
- s) Maurice sends “men worth a thousand men” to help Khusraw II
- t) Bahrām Čübīn rides a piebald horse
- u) John Mystacon helps Khusraw II
- v) Khusraw II wears a garment with Christian symbols on it
- w) Bahrām and Khusraw II fight for the second time (Bahrām is defeated)
- x) Khusraw II’s miraculous escape
- y) After the main battle Khusraw II sends a smaller detachment to fight Bahrām Čübīn
- z) Bahrām Čübīn gives his men a free choice to abandon his troops and 20 000 men leave
- aa) Khusraw II and Bindūy offer protection to the men of Bahrām after their defeat

Narrative block VI: Bahrām Čübīn’s defeat and death

- a) Bahrām flees to Turan
- b) Description of Bahrām’s journey
- c) Bahrām halts in the house of an old woman
- d) Bahrām fights Ibn Qārin
- e) Khāqān IV addresses a speech to Bahrām Čübīn
- f) Bahrām fights and kills Khāqān IV’s brother (1)
- g) Bahrām fights a monster and rescues Khātūn II’s daughter
- h) Khusraw II sends a letter to Khāqān IV
- i) Khusraw II sends a man to intrigue against Bahrām
- j) The man bribes Khātūn II to plot Bahrām’s death
- k) A Turanian man kills Bahrām
- l) Death of Bahrām occurs on the day of *Wahrām*
- m) Bahrām’s last words
- n) Bahrām Čübīn appoints Mardān-Sīna as leader of the army
- o) Gurdiya *de facto* leads the former army of Bahrām Čübīn
- p) Gurdiya rebukes Bahrām for his actions

Narrative block VII: After the death of Bahrām Čübīn

- a) Khāqān IV laments Bahrām’s death
- b) Khāqān IV proposes to Gurdiya
- c) Gurdiya and/or Mardān-Sīna flees from Turan with Bahrām’s former troops
- d) Bahrām’s former troops settle in the land of the Daylamites
- e) Khāqān IV sends another brother (2) to catch Gurdiya
- f) Khāqān IV’s brother (2) proposes to Gurdiya
- g) Gurdiya kills Khāqān IV’s brother (2)
- h) Biṣṭām revolts and crowns himself
- i) Gurdiya marries Biṣṭām
- j) Biṣṭām and Khusraw II are in correspondence with each other

- k) Biṣṭām unites with the former troops of Bahrām Čübīn
- l) Khusraw II sends three of his generals to fight Biṣṭām
- m) Khusraw II writes a letter to Gurdiya (= Kurdiya)
- n) Gurdiya writes a letter to her brother Kurdī
- o) Kurdī, Bahrām's brother, intercedes for Gurdiya
- p) Gurdiya kills Biṣṭām
- q) Gurdiya marries Khusraw II

2.4. Individuals in the Bahrām Čübīn story

Some remarks must be made about the individuals' names. Khāqān and Khātūn are generic names for the king and queen of the Turanians. In the story of Bahrām Čübīn, four different Khāqāns and two Khātūns appear:

Khāqān I = Hurmuzd IV's grandfather and Khusraw I's (Anūšīrwān) wife's father

Khāqān II = the first king of Turan against whom Bahrām fights (*Šāba*, *Sāwa*, etc.)

Khāqān III = son of the latter king of Turan (*Parmūda*, *Barmūda*, *Yaltakīn*, etc.)

Khāqān IV = king of the Turanians who gives protection to Bahrām Čübīn at the end of the story.

In al-Ṭa'ālibī's text, he is characterized as the son of Khāqān III (*Khāqān b. Barmūdha*) (ṬB: 658, 674).

Khāqān II and Khāqān III are often called by other specific names and they are dealt with separately (3.2.1, 3.2.3). However, all four can be referred to by the generic name Khāqān in the texts. There are also two Khātūns: the wife of Khāqān I and the wife of Khāqān IV. When they appear in the text, they are identified as Khātūn I and Khātūn II. Other names mentioned in the charts include:

Bahrām Siyāwuš: Bahrām Čübīn's general who has many roles in the story.

Biṣṭām and **Bindūy:** Khusraw II's two maternal uncles and leading statesmen under the rule of Hurmuzd IV and Khusraw II. According to al-Dīnawarī, they were sons of Šāpūr and grandsons of Khurbundād (DN: 107). In Firdawsī's account and *Mujmal*, Biṣṭām is also called *Gustham*.

Gurdiya: Sister of Bahrām Čübīn. According to al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 195) and al-Ṭa'ālibī (ṬB: 682), Gurdiya is both the sister and wife of Bahrām. In the texts, she is also called Kurdiya.

Hurmuzd IV: Sasanian king (r. 579–590).

Hurmuzd IV's vizier: has a different name in different versions (see 3.2.5).

Ibn Qārin: son of a local king, Qārin, who sends his army against Bahrām Čübīn. According to al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, and *Nihāyat*, he controls the regions of Jurjān and Qūmiš.

John Mystacon: army general from Roman Armenia who helps Khusraw II's army fight against Bahrām Čübīn. In the texts, he is called Mūsīl, Mūčīl, Mūšīl al-Armanī, etc.

Khāqān IV's brother (1): Bahrām Čübīn fights and kills this man. In the text, he is called Yufāris (?), Baghāwīr, Yabghū, Maghātūra, Baghrūn (see 3.4.1).

Khāqān IV's brother (2): After the death of Bahrām Čübīn, Gurdiya kills this man. In the text, he is called Naṭrā, Bartagh, Yartagh and Tuburg (see 3.4.5).

Khātūn II's daughter: Bahrām Čübīn saves Khātūn II's daughter from the clutches of a monster (see 3.4.2).

Khusraw II: The last great king of the Sasanian dynasty (r. 590–628).

Kurdī: Brother of Bahrām Čübīn. In the texts, he is also called Gurdūy.

Mardān-Sīna: General of Bahrām Čübīn's army.

Maryam: daughter of Maurice who is given as wife to Khusraw II.

Maurice: Emperor of the Byzantines.

Maurice's general: Maurice sends his general to help Khusraw II. In the text, he is called Sarjis, Sarjīs, Sargis, etc.

Maurice's son: Maurice sends his son, who has different names in different versions, to help Khusraw II. In the text, he is called Ṭiyādūs, Ṭiyādhūs, Tīdūs, Ṭiyāṭūs, Niyāṭūs and Bāṭūs.

Mihrān-Sitād: an old and wise man who had served Hurmuzd IV's father.

Yazdak: name of Bahrām Čübīn's scribe.

2.5. What information can the narrative motifs provide us?

The 104 narrative motifs provide an overview of the story's narrative outline, major differences, and preponderant themes. In a structural sense the narrative motifs represent what the Bahrām Čübīn story is. They can be used as a tool to assess similarities and differences in the texts. Naturally, the longer accounts cover more narrative motifs. The narrative motifs that are shared by two or more texts, help us recognize textual connections in the corpus. The chart below indicates the number of narrative motifs in each as well as the total number of pages:

Chart 3.

	Number of narrative motifs covered in the texts	Number of pages covering the story of Bahrām Čübīn
QT	13 /104	1 (QT: 664)
DN	71 /104	29 (DN: 81–110)
YQ	50 /104	9 (YQ: 187–195)
ṬB	47 /104	10 (ṬB I: 991–1001)
MS	35 /104	7 (MS I: 312–318)
BL	78 /104	54 (BL II: 762–805, 835–839, 1010–1015)
MQ	12 /104	3 (MQ III: 150, 169–170)
FD	97 /104	374 (FD VII: 487–629 pages / 1650 verses; FD VIII: 7–239 pages / 3082 verses)
ṬB	63 /104	45 (ṬB: 642–687) ⁴⁰
NH	87 /104	46 (NH: 350–396)
GD	18 /104	3 (GD: 98–100)
BKh	35 /104	6 (BKh: 98–103)
MJ	24 /104	7 (MJ: 76–79, 88, 96, 136)
AṬ	29 /104	5 (AṬ: 364–8)

None of the versions, not even Firdawsī, cover all 104 narrative motifs. The length and number of narrative motifs are uneven and pose a challenge for analysis. In addition to the number and distribution of the narrative motifs, one must also pay attention to their rendering and textual form. In other words, the sheer number of motifs has little comparative value. The content must be analysed carefully.

In the corpus, frequency and distribution of the narrative motifs vary considerably. Some motifs appear in all versions and others only in one or two texts. The chart below shows the frequency and distribution of the narrative motifs in different texts:

Chart 4.

Number of texts covering a narrative motif	The narrative motifs	Number of narrative motifs in this category
14	I/b, I/c, IV/d, V/r, VI/a	5
13	II/f, IV/q, V/q, VI/i	4
12	II/e, IV/o, V/d, V/i, V/w	5
11	V/a, VI/k	2
10	I/d, III/c, V/f, V/h, V/j	5
9	II/c, IV/g, V/e, V/m, VI/j, VI/o, VII/q	7
8	III/f, IV/n, V/b, V/s, VII/a, VII/c	6
7	IV/b, IV/p, V/k, V/n, V/t, VII/m, VII/o, VII/p	8
6	III/g, IV/c, V/u, V/x, VII/i	5
5	I/a, II/a, III/i, III/j, IV/m, V/p, V/l, V/aa, VI/b, VI/c, VI/f, VI/m, VII/g	13

⁴⁰ The edition of Zotenberg includes a translation which diminishes the amount of Arabic text roughly by half.

4	I/e, I/f, I/g, I/h, I/i, II/b, II/g, III/a, III/h, IV/h, IV/i, IV/j, IV/k, V/g, V/v, V/y, VI/g, VI/l, VI/n, VII/f, VII/h	21
3	II/d, III/b, III/e, IV/a, IV/e, IV/f, IV/l, V/o, V/z, VI/d, VI/p, VII/e, VII/k	13
2	III/d, V/c, VI/e, VI/h, VII/b, VII/d, VII/j, VII/l, VII/n	9
1	III/k	1

An interesting picture emerges. The number of the most common narrative motifs is rather small: only five narrative motifs are shared by fourteen texts, four narrative motifs by thirteen texts, five narrative motifs by twelve texts and so forth. At the other end of the scale, less frequent narrative motifs are significantly more numerous: thirteen narrative motifs are shared by five texts, twenty-one narrative motifs by four texts, thirteen narrative motifs by three texts and so forth. In this sense, the chart seems to be unbalanced. Less frequent narrative motifs prevail in number. A significant number of ramifications and minor story lines appear. This seems to indicate that the writers had a vast pool of varying material, oral or written, at their disposal or that they edited and reworked their material considerably. We will come back to this idea during the study and in the conclusions.

With all this variety and unbalanced distribution of narrative motifs we want to know what the kernel of the story is. Two suggestions can be made: the most common narrative motifs form the core of the story, or, the essential part of the story is reducible to the narrative blocks I-VII. The two ideas are not mutually inclusive.

If the most common narrative motifs form the core of the story, we must define what the most common motifs are. The boundaries, of course, are flexible and they could, if so decided, include less frequent narrative motifs, for instance, those that are shared by eleven, ten or nine texts of the corpus. The following narrative motifs include those that are present in twelve, thirteen and fourteen texts:

External forces threaten Hurmuzd IV's kingdom (I/b), Hurmuzd IV chooses Bahrām as leading general for his army (I/c), Bahrām makes war against Khāqān II (II/e), Bahrām kills Khāqān II with an arrow (II/f), Bahrām revolts against Hurmuzd IV (IV/d), Khusraw II flees to Azerbaijan (IV/o), Hurmuzd IV is blinded and/or dethroned (IV/q), Bahrām and Khusraw II meet at the Nahrawān River (V/d), Hurmuzd IV is killed by Bistām and Bindūy (V/i), Maurice sends his son, a general or an army to help Khusraw II (V/q), Maurice gives his daughter Maryam as wife to Khusraw II (V/r), Bahrām and Khusraw II fight for the second time (V/w), Bahrām flees to Turan (VI/a), Khusraw II sends a man to intrigue against Bahrām (VI/i).

We can note that in this set of narrative motifs, narrative blocks III and VII are absent. Only the longest accounts deal with them in detail. For instance, Bahrām makes war against Khāqān III (III/c) appears to be shared only by ten texts. All the other narrative motifs in narrative blocks III and VII appear only in nine or less than nine texts. This indicates that the narrative blocks might have appeared in a later phase in the story's evolution or that they represent an independent line of transmission. We should keep these ideas in mind for further analysis. In any case, the two approaches do not provide exactly the same results.

The seven narrative blocks are found in nearly all the fourteen texts except for the shortest versions (QT, MQ, GD, BKh and MJ) that either omit some of the narrative blocks entirely or present them abridged. For instance, Ibn Qutayba, al-Maḡdisī and *Mujmal* omit Khāqān III completely and in the versions of Ibn Qutayba, al-Maḡdisī and Gardīzī the events after Bahrām Čūbīn's death are absent and only summarily presented in al-Mas'ūdī and *Mujmal*. These discrepancies set aside, the seven narrative blocks give a fair idea of the general narrative outline. But if one reduces the number of the narrative blocks from seven to five (erasing III and VII), the remaining five narrative blocks are found in every version including the shortest texts.

Part III – Textual analysis of the Bahrām Čūbīn stories

Introduction

The charts of the seven narrative blocks and the narrative motifs provide the structural skeleton of the Bahrām Čübīn story. Now we can start to deal with the texts, analysis of wording, nomenclature and other textual elements.

Sections 3.1–3.6 provide the reader a balanced and detailed idea of the differences and similarities in the corpus. We will concentrate on the main turning points in the story. The differences are rarely unambiguous and additional reasoning is often required. Though the individual examples in these chapters might simply appear to be details, they open a direct window into the world of editing and writing of the medieval writers in Arabic and Persian.

3.1. Introducing Bahrām Čübīn

In this chapter, we will analyse closely the details of the narrative motifs of introducing Bahrām Čübīn. Before Bahrām Čübīn arrives on the scene, some texts present a narrative framework which can be seen in the charts above (I/a, b). Hurmuzd IV's kingdom is under threat from four sides: Turanians, Byzantines, Arabs, and Khazars. To cope with the threat, Hurmuzd IV must find a strong general. He asks advice from his court members and trustees. An old and wise man called Mihrān-Sitād presents himself at the court and tells a story of Hurmuzd IV's mother who is originally a Turanian princess. According to the story, Mihrān-Sitād led a delegation from Iran to Turan to choose a wife for Hurmuzd IV's father Anūšīrwān or Khusraw I. According to Mihrān-Sitād, he chooses the wife after which Khāqān I orders an astrologer to predict the future for the couple. On this occasion, the astrologer foresees both Hurmuzd IV's birth and a general, Bahrām Čübīn, who will emerge during the lifetime of Hurmuzd IV and fight against the Turanian king, Khāqān II. Based on the astrologer's description, which is retold by Mihrān-Sitād, Hurmuzd IV finds a man, Bahrām Čübīn, and appoints him as the head of the army.

The narrative motifs (I/a, b) are scrutinized closely and the following section 3.1 includes the following subsections: External forces threaten Hurmuzd IV's kingdom (3.1.1), Mihrān-Sitād telling the story of Hurmuzd IV's mother (3.1.2), Astrologer's prophecy (3.1.3), Identifying Bahrām Čübīn and his origins (3.1.4), Bahrām Čübīn chooses 12,000 men for his army (3.1.5) and Presenting arguments to Hurmuzd IV (3.1.6).

3.1.1. External forces threaten Hurmuzd IV's kingdom

In all the versions, Hurmuzd IV's kingdom is under threat from many directions. The Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars and Arabs attack the Persian kingdom and these events occur in a specific year

of Hurmuzd IV's reign. The year of the attacks and the number of threats varies in the texts. In the chart below the year of Hurmuzd IV's reign and the threats in different versions are indicated:

Chart 5.

	Number of Hurmuzd IV's regnal years	Threats mentioned in different sources
QT	-	Turanians (QT: 664)
YQ	-	Turanians, Khazars (YQ: 187)
DN	11 th	Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars (DN: 81)
TB	11 th	Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars, Arabs ('Abbās al-Aḥwal, 'Amr al-Azraq) ⁴¹ (TB I: 991)
MS	11 th	Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars, Arabs ('Abbās al-Aḥwal, 'Amr al-Afwah) (MS I: 312)
BL	15 th	Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars, Arabs ('Abbās al-Aḥwal, 'Amr b. al-Azraq) (BL II: 760)
MQ	-	Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars, Arabs (MQ III: 169)
FD	10 th	Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars, Arabs ('Abbās, 'Amr) (FD VII: 488–9)
TB	-	Turanians (TB: 642)
NH	11 th	Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars, Arabs (NH: 350)
GD	11 th	Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars, Arabs ('Abbās al-Aḥwal) (GD: 98)
BKh	-	Turanians (BKh: 98)
MJ	-	Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars, Arabs (MJ: 76)
AT	16 th /11 th	Turanians, Byzantines, Khazars, Arabs (AT: 364)

The 11th regnal year seems to be the most common one. Bal'amī (15th), Firdawsī (10th), and Ibn al-Aṭīr (16th and 11th) stand out with their exceptional numbers. There is some fluctuation in the manuscript of Ibn al-Aṭīr's text since in al-Qāḍī's edition the text reads only the 16th regnal year (*fī sanat sitt 'ašrat*) (AT: 364), but the footnote in Tornberg's edition indicates the 11th year as well (Ibn al-Aṭīr, 1866: 342). This might be a lapse from the copyist's hand or a mistake. In any case, in Ibn al-Aṭīr's manuscript tradition both numbers were known. Only Firdawsī refers to the 10th year. No other year is mentioned in other manuscripts of Khalighī-Moṭlagh's edition which are indeed many (FD VII: 487). Metrical requirements might motivate the choice of Firdawsī's poetical text. Bal'amī indicates the 15th year, which is only attested in his text. However, Bal'amī's manuscript tradition is exceptionally vast, combining more than 160 manuscripts (Peacock, 2007: 2), and it is therefore likely that other variants exist too.

⁴¹ Apparently, the names 'Abbās the Squinter (*al-Aḥwal*) and 'Amr the Blue-Eyed One (*al-Azraq*) are meant to be pejorative. In al-Mas'ūdī's account, 'Amr is known as the Big-Mouthed One (*al-Afwah*). The identity of the two Arabs is unknown (Al-Ṭabarī, 1999: 300–1).

If we disregard Ibn al-Aṭīr's text, we are left with Firdawsī and Bal'amī as genuinely different years. Of these two, Bal'amī stands out as the most peculiar since we cannot assume the influence of the metrical requirements.

Only nine of the fourteen texts, those of al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, Bal'amī, al-Maqdisī, Firdawsī, *Nihāyat*, Gardīzī, *Mujmal* and Ibn al-Aṭīr, mention the four threats. Of the remaining five versions, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭa'ālibī and Ibn al-Balkhī speak of multiple enemies in general terms without specifying the threats. In al-Dīnawarī's, al-Ṭa'ālibī's and Ibn al-Balkhī's texts the enemies come from many sides⁴² and according to al-Ya'qūbī, "the enemies of Hurmuzd IV have become bold" (*ṭumma ijtara'ū 'alay-hi*) and "they made raids in his territories" (*wa-ghazzū bilāda-hu*) (YQ: 187). Therefore, all four texts acknowledge a multitude of enemies: the omission of specific threats might have been a voluntary choice and does not reflect the authors' sources. At least Ibn al-Balkhī used al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rīkh* (BK: 8), which indicates all four threats, as one of his sources. We do not possess similar information regarding al-Dīnawarī's and al-Ya'qūbī's sources: they may or may not have used a source including the Byzantines and Arabs.

An interesting connection appears: al-Dīnawarī and al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī share content in wording and, therefore, exhibit a strong textual connection.⁴³ Because the three texts are obviously connected in one way or another, the question arises whether al-Ṭabarī, as posterior to al-Ya'qūbī and al-Dīnawarī, added the Arabs and/or the Khazars or whether he used a completely different source text. I am inclined to assume that the appearance of the four threats in al-Ṭabarī's text was not his own insertion. It is possible that the four threats existed already in the very first Arabic recensions of the story on Bahrām Čūbīn and the lacunae in al-Dīnawarī's and al-Ya'qūbī's texts can be attributed to style and literary choices.

This argument is corroborated by Czeplédy, who deals with the onslaught against Iran and finds parallels between Zoroastrian eschatological writings, namely *Zand i Vahuman Yasn*, *Jāmāsp-nāmag* and *Ayātkār i Žāmāspīk*, and the story of Bahrām Čūbīn (1958: 36). In these texts the Turanians, Byzantines, and Arabs simultaneously attack Iran, which is followed by a victory of the king of Patašxvārgar who is identified in *Zand i Vahuman Yasn* as Kay Vahrām (Czeplédy 1958: 67–9). Czeplédy's conclusions seem to confirm that at least those three threats were mentioned in Pahlavi

⁴² *hadaqa bi-hi al-'a-dā' min kull wajh* (DN: 81), *bi-'aṭrāf mamlikati-hi* (TB: 642); *az aṭrāf-i jahān* (BK: 98)

⁴³ Al-Ya'qūbī's wording is *ṭumma ijtara'ū a'ādī-hi 'alay-hi wa-ghazzū bilāda-hu* (YQ: 187) whereas al-Ṭabarī employs an almost identical phrase *wa-jtara'a a'adā'u-hu 'alay-hi wa-ghazzū bilāda-hu* (TB I: 991). In the case of al-Dīnawarī, the text uses a phrase *hadaqa bi-hi al-'a-dā' min kull wajh fa-ktanafū iktināf al-watar siyatay al-qaws* (DN: 81) and al-Ṭabarī's wording is *qad iktināf bilād al-furs al-'a-dā' min kull wajh ka-ktanafū iktināf al-watar siyatay al-qaws* (TB I: 991).

texts in connection with Kay Vahrām alias Bahrām Čübīn. Interestingly, the Arabic and Persian texts that mention less than four threats, exclude first the Arabs, found in *Zand I Vahuman Yasn*, and retain the Khazars, who do not appear in the Pahlavi text. While the evidence is too little to permit any firm conclusions to be drawn, it is quite possible that this motif derives from Pahlavi texts, *Zand I Vahuman Yasn* or some other.

The case of Ibn Qutayba is even more intriguing. As we have earlier indicated (see 1.5), Ibn Qutayba's and al-Maqqdisī's texts are linked and share even the same wording. Therefore, it is likely that al-Maqqdisī used Ibn Qutayba's text or they have a common source. If this assumption is correct, al-Maqqdisī's addition of Byzantines, Khazars, and Turanians seems to be a later insertion. It is tempting to think that Ibn Qutayba's version is the shortest because it is the oldest since a general tendency in Arabic historiography is to accumulate over time. However, I argue that this is not the case and Ibn Qutayba's text is a compressed and shortened version: his source for Bahrām Čübīn could not have been as short as *K. al-Ma'ārif* presents it. One cannot reasonably claim that when Ibn Qutayba died, in 889, longer accounts on Bahrām Čübīn were no longer in circulation and that suddenly, one or two decades later, al-Dīnawarī and al-Ya'qūbī had longer texts at their disposal. The mere fact that Ibn Qutayba mentioned Bahrām Čübīn indicates that he was aware of the story's Arabic translations, which were undoubtedly longer than the abridged story in his *K. al-Ma'ārif*.

Al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and Gardīzī mention the names of two Arabs who are threatening the Persian kingdom. The first, 'Abbās or 'Abbās al-Aḥwal, has no variation, whereas the second name has two variants: 'Amr al-Azraq given by al-Ṭabarī (ṬB I: 991) and Bal'amī and 'Amr al-Afwah by al-Mas'ūdī (MS I: 312). The difference between al-Azraq and al-Afwah in writing is too significant to be attributed to a misspelling of the copyist since the names without diacritic marks are not similar at all.

Some cities and regions are also mentioned in association with the four threats. In the nomenclature of attacked or reclaimed cities one can note both a considerable variety and some connections between the texts. The text of Ibn Qutayba is the only text in which this information is absent:

Chart 6.

	Regions and cities associated with the Turanians	Regions and cities associated with the Byzantines	Regions and cities associated with the Khazars	Regions and cities associated with the Arabs
DN	Herat (DN: 81)	Nasaybin, Āmid, Martyropolis	Armenia, Azerbaijan (DN: 81)	-

		(<i>mayyāfāriqīn</i>), Dara (DN: 81)		
YQ	Khorasan (YQ: 188)	-	Azerbaijan (YQ: 188)	-
ṬB	Badghīs, Herat (ṬB I: 991)	-	al-Bāb wa-l-Abwāb (ṬB I: 991)	Banks of the Eufrat, al-Sawād (ṬB I: 991)
MS	Herat, Bādghīs, Būšanj, Khorasan (MS I: 312)	al-Jazīra (MS I: 312)	Jabal al-Qabkh (MS I: 312)	-
BL	Oxus River (<i>jayhūn</i>), Balkh, Khorasan, Ṭāliqān, Herat, Bādghīs (BL II: 760)	Syria, Nasaybin, Ahwāz (BL II: 760)	Armenia, Azerbaijan (BL II: 760)	-
MQ	-	-	-	Yemen (MQ III: 169)
NH	Khorasan, The Great River (<i>al-nahr al- ʿaḏam</i>), Termez (<i>tirmidh</i>), Balkh (NH: 350)	Nasaybin, Āmid, Martyropolis, Syria, al-Jazīrat, Ctesiphon (<i>al-madāʿin</i>) (NH: 350)	Azerbaijan, al-Jabal (NH: 350)	Fārs, Īrānšahr, Hurmuzd-Kharah (NH: 350)
FD	Herat, River of Marv (<i>marwrūd</i>), Marv, Khorasan, Oxus River (<i>jayhūn</i>) (FD VII: 488)	-	Armenia, Ardabīl (FD VII: 489)	Eufrat River (FD VII: 488)
ṬB	Balkh, Īrānšahr (ṬB: 642)	-	-	-
GD	-	-	Ṭanbūs (?) (GD: 98)	Yemen (ṬB: 642)
BKh	Khorasan, Bādghīs (BKh: 98)	-	-	-
MJ	Khorasan (MJ: 76)	-	-	-
AṬ	Herat, Bādghīs (AṬ: 364)	-	al-Bāb wa-l-Abwāb (AṬ: 364)	al-Sawād (AṬ: 364)

The above chart is an excellent example of the scattered nature of the content and divergence of nomenclature in the texts. It also exemplifies a creative use of different names by the authors. The differences above may indicate both the creativity of the writers and the multitude of the sources they used. For instance, it is possible that the writers had a rough idea of the area, be it Khorasan, Armenia or the land of the Arabs, and added the names according to their best knowledge.

As general trends one can note that Khorasan (YQ, MS, BL, NH, FD, BKh, MJ), Herat (DN, ṬB, MS, BL, FD, AṬ), Bādghīs (ṬB, MS, BL, BKh, AṬ), Balkh (BL, NH, ṬB) and the Oxus River (BL, FD) are associated with the Turanians; Nasaybin (DN, BL, NH), Āmid (DN, NH), Martyropolis (DN, NH), Syria (BL, NH) and al-Jazīra (MS, NH) are associated with the Byzantines; Azerbaijan (YQ, DN, BL, NH), Armenia (DN, BL, FD) and Bāb wa-l-Abwāb (ṬB, AṬ) are associated with the Khazars; and the Eufrat

(ṬB, FD), al-Sawād (ṬB, AṬ) and Yemen (MQ, GD) are associated with the Arabs. These names appear more than once, and the above connections between the texts can be seen. Some of the connections such as al-Dīnawarī–*Nihāyat* and al-Ṭabarī–Ibn al-Aṭīr are expected (see 1.6.10, 1.6.14) but some others such as Bal'amī–Firdawsī, al-Mas'ūdī–*Nihāyat*, Bal'amī–*Nihāyat* and al-Maqdisī–Gardīzī are completely new. But these are merely one-way connections. The groups as regards Khorasan and Herat, for instance, suggest that the connections between the texts are more complex than simple and straightforward.

Some exceptional names exist such as Ṭāliqān, Būšanj, Termez (*tirmidh*), the Marv River (*marwrūd*), Marv and Īrānšahr for the Turanians; Dara, Ahwāz, and Ctesiphon for the Byzantines; Jabal al-Qabkh, al-Jabal, Ardabīl, Ṭanbūs for the Khazars; and Fārs, Īrānšahr and Hurmuzd-Khara for the Arabs. These names are mentioned only once. There are also texts which have no connection to other versions. These are al-Ṭā'ālibī as regards the Turanians (Balkh, Īrānšahr), al-Mas'ūdī and Gardīzī as regards the Khazars (Jabal al-Qabkh, Ṭanbūs) and *Nihāyat* as regards the Arabs (Fārs, Īrānšahr, Hurmuzd-Kharah).

If one takes into account both the lexical connections forming certain groups and the nomenclature that has no connection to other texts, a confusing picture of overlaps, vague connections and asymmetrical groups emerges. However, this is not an exception and it should be considered emblematic of the corpus. Similar settings often occur within the stories of Bahrām Čūbīn.

3.1.2. Mihrān-Sitād telling the story of Hurmuzd IV's mother

When Hurmuzd IV realizes the seriousness of the situation, he has to find a solution. He has to find a way to deal with the Turanians, who are mentioned as the most severe threat. In this context, a man appears and introduces Mihrān-Sitād to Hurmuzd IV. After this introduction, Mihrān-Sitād tells a story from many years ago about a royal delegation travelling from Iran to the court of Khāqān I to find a wife for Hurmuzd IV's father, Anūšīrwān I. Mihrān-Sitād appears in five versions whereas the man who introduces him is mentioned only in four texts. In the chart below, one can see the differences in nomenclature and the number of soldiers in the delegation:

Chart 7.

	The man who introduces Mihrān-Sitād to	The names without diacritic marks	Variations of Mihrān-Sitād's name	Number of the troops with Mihrān-Sitād's delegation	Name of the astrologer

	Hurmuzd IV				
YQ	Bihzād (YQ: 188)	بهراد	Mihrān-Sitād	-	-
BL	Saḥnān (?) (BL II: 764)	سحان	Mihrā-Sitād / Mihrān-Sitād	50 army generals	-
NH	Anūšjān (NH: 351)	انوسحان	Mihrbastān	50 cavaliers	Kandugh (کندع)
FD	Nastūh (FD VII: 493)	نسوه	Mihrān-Šitād	120 brave warriors	-
MJ	-	-	Mihrān-Sitād	-	-

It is striking to note how different the names for the man introducing Mihrān-Sitād are. The names Nastūh and Bihzād are unrelated to other names. On the other hand, Saḥnān and Anūšjān probably derive from the same source since without diacritic marks the names are quite similar. If one eliminates the first part of the name in *Nihāyat* (Anū which could as well be Abū) the latter parts سحان and سحان match quite well. In addition, both Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* mention fifty as the number of the men accompanying Mihrān-Sitād. In this detail, al-Ya'qūbī and Firdawsī seem to represent distinct textual traditions. Another possibility is to suggest that one of them has invented the name. Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* are connected.

One should note that many of the names given by *Nihāyat* are the result of typos or lapses of the copyist, of which *Mihrbastān* here is indicative. Many such examples can be found and to give two examples, *Nihāyat* calls Bahrām Čübīn's general either *Yazdān-Farrūkh* or *Yazdād-Farrukh b. Abarkān* (NH: 352, 353) and Hurmuzd IV's vizier either *Yazdān-Jušnas* or *Yazdād-Jušnas* (NH: 359). Dānišpažūh's edition could have done considerably more to correct these misleading forms by comparing them to other texts.

3.1.3. Astrologer's prophecy and description of Bahrām Čübīn

After Mihrān-Sitād has chosen a wife for Hurmuzd IV's father, the girl's mother, Khātūn I, refuses to give her away. She insists that an astrologer should be brought in to explain her daughter's future. The astrologer arrives, and in his prophecy, both Hurmuzd IV, the future son of Anūširwān, and a general who will be sent by Hurmuzd IV against the king of Turan are mentioned. The general is later identified as Bahrām Čübīn. The astrologer's prophecy appears in the texts of al-Ya'qūbī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* and it has some notable differences:

Chart 7.

	Astrologer's description of Hurmuzd IV	Astrologer's description of Bahrām Čübīn
YQ	-	not of noble descent (<i>laysa bi-l-nabīh</i>) (YQ: 188)
BL	not tall and not short (<i>na kūtāh na dirāz</i>), wide-eyed (<i>farākh čašm</i>), having joined eyebrows (BL II: 765)	one of the great Persians (<i>az buzurgān-i 'ajam</i>), those of royal origin (<i>az malikzādīgān</i>), tall, wiry (<i>bih tan-i khušk</i>), of dark colour (<i>bih gūna-yi čardah</i>) having joined eyebrows (BL II: 765)
FD	tall and strong, like a fierce lion, brave like a lion and, in generosity like a cloud, black-eyed, furious and impatient (FD VII: 496)	eminent horseman (<i>suwāri-yi sarāfirāz-i mihtar-parast</i>), tall and wiry (<i>bih andām-i khušk</i>), has dark curly hair (<i>bih gird-i sar-aš ja'd mūi čū musk</i>), his bones are strong (<i>qawī ustukhwān</i>), has a big nose, dark-faced, quick to talk, quarrelsome (<i>suturg</i>), from the lineage of the heroes (<i>ham az pahlawānān-aš bāšad nasab</i>) (FD VII: 496–7)
NH	of medium height (<i>ghulām-an marbū'-an</i>), has joined eyebrows and great importance (<i>ažim al-hāmmat</i>) (NH: 351)	very tall (<i>'ažim-an žiwāl-an</i>), with a distinguished face (<i>ādam mufarraḡ al-wajh</i>), has hooked nose (<i>aqnā al-anf</i>), curly hair (<i>ja'd al-šā'ar</i>) and joined eyebrows (<i>maqūr al-ḡajibayn</i>) (NH: 352)

Al-Ya'qūbī has a short but very different description. His text is the only version to describe Bahrām Čübīn as of non-noble descent whereas Bal'amī and Firdawsī both affirm him as either of noble or royal descent.

Regarding the description of Hurmuzd IV, Bal'amī's and *Nihāyat*'s texts seem to be on par with one another on a semantic level. They both describe Hurmuzd IV as of medium size and having joined eyebrows. Firdawsī does not seem to be connected with Bal'amī's and *Nihāyat*'s versions either semantically or lexically. A different case is the description of Bahrām Čübīn, which overlaps through Bal'amī's, Firdawsī's and *Nihāyat*'s texts. Bahrām is described as tall in all three texts. Bal'amī and Firdawsī depict him as wiry (*bih tan-i khušk* / *bih andām-i khušk*) with similar vocabulary and they both describe Bahrām as dark (*bih gūna-yi čarda* / *siyah čarda*) and of noble lineage.⁴⁴ Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* are connected by mentioning the joined eyebrows and Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* by the curly hair (*ja'd mūi* / *ja'd al-šā'ar*) and the nose, which Firdawsī describes as big and *Nihāyat* as hooked.

After Mihrān-Sitād has presented the description of the astrologer, Hurmuzd IV wants to find the man matching the astrologer's description, who turns out to be Bahrām Čübīn. In Bal'amī's version, the chief of the magi (*mawbadān-mawbad*) recognizes Bahrām Čübīn based on the

⁴⁴ The expression "*tan-i khušk*" is found elsewhere in Bal'amī's text (BL II: 762). See chart 5 below.

description (BL II: 766) whereas in Firdawsī's text the man who recognizes him is called Zād-Farrukh (FD VII: 498) and in *Nihāyat* Yazdān-Farrūkh b. Abarkān (NH: 352). The names Zād-Farrukh and Yazdān-Farrūkh have such a similarity in that they probably refer to one and the same person.

3.1.4. Identifying Bahrām Čübīn and his origins

Each version gives some description of Bahrām Čübīn, his origin, and name. This information is given when Bahrām Čübīn is recognized and invited to the court or later in the story. In the chart below transcriptions of the name and the description are given:

Chart 8.

	Bahrām Čübīn's name and origin	Description of Bahrām Čübīn and his functions
QT	Bahrām Čübīn (<i>bahrām šūbinat</i>) (QT: 664)	-
DN	Bahrām, son of Bahrām Jušnas, called Bahrām Čübīn (<i>bahrām bin bahrām jušnas, wa-huwa al-mulaqqab bi-bahrām šūbīn</i>) (DN: 81–2)	Hurmuzd IV's governor (<i>'āmilu-hu</i>) at the borders of Armenia and Azerbaijan (DN: 82), Bahrām is mentioned as dwelling in Ray (DN: 86–7)
YQ	Bahrām Čübīn (<i>bahrām šūbīn</i>) (YQ: 188)	From the city of Ray, dwells in Azerbaijan (YQ: 188)
ṬB	Bahrām, son of Bahrām Jušnas, known as Čübīn (<i>bahrām bin bahrām jušnas, mā'rūf bi-jūbīn</i>) (ṬB I: 992).	From the city of Ray (ṬB I: 992), in the Persian kingdom three men had excellent skill in archery including Āriš (<i>aršišyātīn</i>), Sūkhṛā and Bahrām (ṬB I: 992). Āriš (<i>īraš</i>) was Bahrām Čübīn's ancestor (ṬB I: 997)
MS	Bahrām, son of Jūbīn, son of Mīlād, from the lineage of Anūš known as al-Rām (<i>bahrām min walad jūbīn bin mīlād min nasl 'anūš al-mā'rūf bi-l-rām</i>) (MS I: 312)	Satrap of Ray (<i>marzubān al-ray</i>) (MS I: 312)
BL	Bahrām, son of Bahrām, son of Jušnas and his lineage goes to Gurgīn-Mīlād (<i>bahrām bin bahrām bin jušnas, nasb-i way bih gurgīn-mīlād kišad</i>) (BL II: 762)	Born in Ray, of princes and generals of Ray (<i>az malikzādīgān wa-iṣfahbidān-i ray</i>), the bravest man of his time, of darkish skin (<i>gūna čardah</i>), tall and barren bodied (<i>biḥ tan-i khušk</i>) and for this he was called javelin-like (<i>čūbīn</i>) (BL II: 762); Satrap from Ray who ruled Armenia, Azerbaijan, Jabāl, Jurjān and Ṭabaristān (BL II: 763); Bahrām Čübīn and Bahrām Gūr are the two men who are famous for their valour (<i>mardī</i>) and skills in combat (<i>mubārazat</i>) (BL II: 763)
MQ	Bahrām Čübīn (<i>bahrām šūbīna</i>) (MQ III: 169)	General from Ray (<i>iṣfahbadh al-ray</i>) (MQ III: 169)
FD	Bahrām, son of Bahrām, son of Gušasp (<i>bahrām-i bahrām pūr-i gušasp</i>) (FD VII: 498), Āriš was Bahrām Čübīn's ancestor and Gurgīn his grandfather (FD VIII: 29).	Eminent horseman (<i>suwāri-yi sarāfarāz wa pičanda asb</i>), ruler and general (<i>marzubān</i>) of Barda' and Ardabīl (FD VII: 498). Ray is mentioned numerous times in association with Bahrām (FD VIII: 26–27, etc.)
ṬB	Bahrām Čübīn (<i>bahrām šūbīn</i>) (ṬB: 643)	Satrap of Azerbaijan, in him unite the qualities of chivalry (<i>furusīyyat</i>), valour (<i>šujā'at</i>), and skills in leadership and politics (<i>wa-l-ālāt al-qiyādat wa-l-siyāsāt</i>), in him appear the signs of intrepidity (<i>sīmā'</i>)

		<i>al-najdat</i>) and independence in leadership (<i>fī-hi šurūt al-istiqlāl bi-l-r'āsat</i>) (TB: 643). Ray is mentioned once in association with Bahrām (TB: 660)
NH	Bahrām son of Bahrām Čübīn (<i>bahrām bin bahrām jūbīn</i>) (NH: 352), Bahrām, son of Bahrām Jušnas Urūz al-Malik (<i>bahrām bin bahrām jušnas urūz al-malik</i>) (NH: 371)	Hurmuzd IV's governor at the borders of Armenia (<i>'āmilu-ka bi-ṭa'r armaniyya</i>) (NH: 352), Bahrām governor of Khorasan (<i>bahrām iṣfahbad-i khurāsān</i>) (NH: 365)
GD	Bahrām Čübīn (<i>bahrām čübīn</i>), from the lineage of Gurgīn, descendants of the great Āriš (<i>wa-nasba-yi gurgīn-i mīlād wa-az farzandān-i Āriš buzurg buwadh</i>) who was said to be of royal origins (<i>az kināra-yi pādšāhī bi-khwānad</i>) (GD: 98).	Satrap (<i>marzubān</i>) (GD: 98)
BKh	Bahrām Čübīn (<i>bahrām čübīn</i>) (BK: 98)	Hurmuzd IV's army's commander (<i>iṣfahsālār</i>) (BK: 98)
MJ	Bahrām Čübīn (<i>bahrām čübīna</i>) (MJ: 76) and Bahrām Čübīn son of Gušasp the Champion (<i>bahrām čübīna pīsar-i gušasb-i pahlawān</i>) (MJ: 96)	-
AI	Bahrām Khušnaš [= <i>Jušnas</i>] known as Čübīn (<i>bahrām khušnaš wa-yu'raf bi-jūbīn</i>) (AI: 364)	-

The chart above describes Bahrām's origins in many different ways. Most characteristics appear in many texts whereas some details appear only once. Based on the description, one can form at least the following five groups:

- In the texts of al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, *Mujmal*, and Ibn al-Aṭīr the name of Bahrām's father or grandfather is Jušnas / Gušasp.
- Gurgīn or Gurgīn-Mīlād is mentioned by al-Mas'ūdī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī⁴⁵ and Gardīzī.
- According to al-Ṭabarī, Firdawsī and Gardīzī, Bahrām's ancestor was Āriš.
- Al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālībī and *Nihāyat* mention Armenia or Azerbaijan. In the case of Firdawsī, Barda' and Ardabīl are both situated in Azerbaijan.
- The city of Ray is mentioned in association with Bahrām in the texts of Al-Ya'qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, Bal'amī, al-Maqdisī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālībī and *Nihāyat*.

As noted before (see 1.6.6), Bal'amī's *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī* claims to be a translation of al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'riḫ*. In reality, Bal'amī's text on Bahrām Čübīn is longer and more elaborate although it

⁴⁵ Firdawsī uses both Gurgīn-Mīlād and Mīlād (FD VIII: 21, 29).

shares some important motifs with al-Ṭabarī. One noticeable link is the comparison of Bahrām Čübīn to other eminent men in history: al-Ṭabarī compares Bahrām to Āriš and Sūkhṛā (ṬB I: 992–3) and Bal'amī to Bahrām Gūr (BL II: 763). The content is different, but the motif remains the same and the fact that this motif is absent in all other versions connects the two. According to Czeglédy, the genealogical linking of Bahrām's family with Āriš also seems to be of late origin (1958: 27).

Āriš is an important character for another reason. In Iranian national history, Kay Āriš, the best archer of Iran, shot an arrow that defined the border between Iran and Turan. Helped by divine guidance, the arrow flew a whole day and landed by the River Oxus. The Arsacids traced their descent back to Kay Āriš, recognized in the Middle Persian sources as the grandson of Kay Kawād (Yarshater, 1983: 444). Therefore, al-Ṭabarī, Firdawsī, and Gardīzī indirectly recognize Bahrām's Arsacid descent.

This is not the case in al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* since they mention Āriš (*Ārsnās*, DN: 92; *Arsī Ayyās*, NH: 367) in a very different context. They associate Āriš with Bindūy's bravery when he is willing to sacrifice his life for Khusraw II in the situation where Bahrām Čübīn's forces are threatening them (see V/s). Rather than to amplify Bahrām's greatness or noble origins, Āriš is used to underline Bahrām's enemy's sacrifice, which reveals a significantly different underlying motif. In this regard, al-Ṭabarī, Firdawsī, and Gardīzī represent a different narrative tradition compared to al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*.

Bahrām described as a governor of Khorasan is found only in the text of *Nihāyat*. Al-Mas'ūdī presents partly unique content by indicating that Bahrām Čübīn originates from the lineage of Anūš known as al-Rām, son of Mīlād. Only Anūš can be considered an original addition, since the name Mīlād or Gurgīn-Mīlād is found in other texts. For an unknown reason, al-Mas'ūdī left out the name Gurgīn. Bahrām's ancestor Anūš could refer to Enos, son of Seth, but a reference to Anūširwān, Hurmuzd IV's father, would be bizarre in light of the general context and moral of the story: shared ancestry of both Hurmuzd IV and Bahrām Čübīn would provide a completely new background for Bahrām's aspirations for royal power. This is not the case since none of the texts propose Sasanian origins for Bahrām.

3.1.5. Bahrām Čübīn chooses 12,000 quadragenarian men for his army

After being assigned to a mission to fight the Turanians, Bahrām Čübīn chooses men for his army. King Hurmuzd IV gives him a free hand and all available resources to equip his army.

This motif of 12,000 men emerges in most of the sources; only in al-Maḡdisī, Gardīzī, Ibn al-Balkhī, and *Mujmal* is it absent. Ibn Qutayba (QT: 664), al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 188), al-Ṭabarī (ṬB I: 992), al-Mas'ūdī (MS: 313), al-Ṭa'ālibī (ṬB: 643) and Ibn al-Aṭīr (AT: 364) merely mention Bahrām Čübīn and his 12,000 men or their specific age, forty years, without further developing the theme. Only al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, *Nihāyat* and Firdawsī present a more detailed version in which the number of men and their age are discussed in addition to arguments for choosing this particular number of men. The narrative motif of choosing 12,000 men must be an integral part of the Bahrām Čübīn story.

The content of the motif can be divided roughly into two parts: choosing the 12,000 men including the army generals and presenting arguments to Hurmuzd IV, perplexed by the small number of men. The army generals' names are only mentioned in Firdawsī and *Nihāyat*. However, all four sources present arguments referring to mythical kings of the past and their success in military expeditions. All four accounts seem to have the same inspiration, but in detail they differ significantly. In the chart below one can see the passages in which the age of the soldiers is mentioned:

Chart 9.

	Age of the men and wording
DN	40; <i>laysa fī-him 'illā min anāf al-'arba'in</i> (DN: 82)
ṬB	No specific age; <i>min al-kuhūl dūn al-ṣabāb</i> (ṬB I: 992)
BL	40; <i>na pīr wa na jawān, mardānī miyāna miqdār čihil sāla</i> (BL II: 766)
FD	40; <i>čihil sāligān nibištand nām / daram bar kam wa biš azīn šud ḥarām</i> (FD VII: 502)
NH	50; <i>wa-kānū jamī'an kuhūl-an wa-lam yakun fī-him illā mā qad nayyif' alā khamsīn sanat</i> (NH: 353)

Forty years seems to be the most common age for Bahrām's soldiers. *Nihāyat* stands as the only exception with its ill-fitting number fifty. The number forty is a topos in Arabic and Persian Islamic literature and it reflects the general notion of perfection and completion (Conrad, 1987: 230–2). For instance, the Prophet Muḥammad received his revelations at the age of forty and the age of forty is mentioned by the Qur'ān as the age of maturity and strength (46:15)

If we disregard the discrepancy in numbers, one can note that the group Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat* plus al-Dīnawarī share content, which, as we can see below, is often the case on many occasions in Bahrām Čübīn stories. Here al-Dīnawarī is also part of the group which becomes understandable through its connection with *Nihāyat*. Indeed, al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, and Firdawsī are connected by the number forty solely, but, taking into account the overall picture of the narrative

motifs, the group consisting of Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* is far more recurrent. In the conclusions, we will discuss in detail this group (see 4.4).

Al-Ṭabarī recognizes the motif of mature men (*min al-kuhūl*), but for one reason or another, omits their specific age which probably indicates that al-Ṭabarī had, in fact, a longer text at his disposal which he abbreviated. As the three other versions indicate the age of the soldiers, be it forty or fifty, it is reasonable to assume that al-Ṭabarī's source had this information as well.

The number 12,000 – as well as the number forty above – is a topos in Persian literature and Near Eastern literature in general. For instance, in *Šāhnāma* 12,000 men appear in the stories of Zāl and Mihrāb (FD I: 225), Rustam and Suhrāb (FD II: 128), Kay Khusraw and Kāwus (FD II: 458) and many other places. The number 12,000 is perhaps the most reiterated symbolic number in Firdawsī's massive *Šāhnāma*, and therefore, it is not unexpected that this number is mentioned in Bahrām Čübīn's story. Bahrām Čübīn also chooses generals for his army. Only *Nihāyat* and Firdawsī describe and name them. *Nihāyat* speaks about five generals, whereas Firdawsī mentions only three. Below, I give the full translation of the passages:

Chart 10.

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
FD	Yal-Sīna, because his chest was full of animosity; [Bahrām] made him the leader of the glorious fighters / He would appear in the first row the day of battle; He turned around with a horse [which], he said, was of noble breed / [and] brought thoughts of warfare in the minds of the warriors (FD VII: 502)	Īzad-Gušasp, who would not turn his horse back from a fire; [Bahrām] ordered that he would coordinate / the left wing [of the army] (FD VII: 503)	-	Bandā-Gušasp, with the right wing; In the rear of the army was Bandā-Gušasp / who would catch lions by the tail while riding on horseback (FD VII: 503)	-
NH	Bahrām b. Siyāwuš, head of his (Bahrām's) private knights (NH: 353)	Zādān-Farrūkh b. Abarkān, head of cavalry forces (NH: 353)	Mardān-Šīna al-Rawandaštī, main general of the army (NH: 353)	Bandān-Jusnas b. al-Jalhān al-Rāzī, head of avant-garde forces (NH: 353)	Bandād-Yamīdīn b. Dāštān Šāh, head of his vanguard (NH: 353)

At first, the generals in Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* seem not at all on a par with each other. Starting with the generals Firdawsī mentions, one may note that the first general Yal-Sīna, later Yalān-Sīna, appears in the *Šāhnāma* in the account of Bahrām Čübīn in the same function 31 times. The same name appears once in *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh* (MJ: 96) and can be identified as Bahrām's general. However, none of *Nihāyat*'s generals can be identified with this name.

The second general, Īzād-Gušasp appears in Firdawsī's text in the same function 19 times. The character can be found in *Mujmal* (MJ: 96) in the form of Īzād-Gušasb and in al-Ṭabarī in the form of Īzād-Jušnas (ṬB I: 997) although his function is not clear. None of the generals in *Nihāyat* can be identified with him.

The third general, Bandā-Gušasp, appears in the *Šāhnāma* in the same function five times. This is the most exciting character in comparative regard since the name can be juxtaposed with *Nihāyat*'s Bandān-Jusnas b. al-Jalhān al-Rāzī because Jusnas is an Arabized form of Gušnasp. In Firdawsī's account, Bandā-Gušasp is responsible for the rear of the army whereas in *Nihāyat* Bandān Jusnas b. al-Jalhān al-Rāzī leads the avant-garde forces.

Let us take a look at the generals appearing in *Nihāyat*. Apart from Bandān-Jusnas b. al-Jalhān al-Rāzī's resembling Bandā-Gušasp, all the other names are different. The first, Bahrām b. Siyāwuš, sometimes written as Siyāwušān, appears five times in *Nihāyat*. The name also appears in the texts of: al-Dīnawarī (DN: 91–95), al-Ṭabarī (ṬB I: 998), Firdawsī (FD VII: 505, 541, 572, 594; FD VIII: 71), Ibn al-Balkhī (BKh: 102) and Ibn al-Aṭīr (AT: 367) and Ibn al-Balkhī (BKh: 102) and he is often described as Bahrām Čübīn's general. Bahrām Siyāwuš has a leading role in the episode where Khusraw II is chased into a monastery (V/j) and he is the one who attempts to assassinate Bahrām Čübīn on the polo field (V/k).

The second general, Zādān-Farrūkh b. Abarkān⁴⁶ appears in *Nihāyat* two times. As mentioned above, a man called Zād-Farrukh appears in Firdawsī's text as the man who recognizes Bahrām Čübīn from Mihrān-Sitād's story (FD VII: 498). Therefore, it has an equivalent in Firdawsī's text even though the identity of the characters does not match.

The third general, Mardān-Šīna al-Rūyandaštī⁴⁷ appears in *Nihāyat* nine times and has equivalents in other sources. Al-Dīnawarī refers to an individual called Mardān-Sīna al-Rūydaštī⁴⁸ who is described as a general of Bahrām Čübīn (*ra'īs ašḥāb bahrām*). Al-Ṭa'ālibī refers to Mardān-

⁴⁶ Also in the form Yazdān-Farrūkh b. Abarkān. Dānišpažūh's edition does not correct these discrepancies.

⁴⁷ Also written as Mardān-Šīna al-Rawandhūndī, Mardān-Šīna and Mardān-Sabnah (NH: 353, 356, 358–9, 379, 388, 391–3).

⁴⁸ Also written as Mardān-Sīna Wīzad-Jušnas (DN: 89, 98, 104, 106, 107).

Sīna as Bahrām’s chief general (*wajh qawwādi-hi*) (TB: 683, 684) and Bal’amī refers to Mardān-Šāh (BL II: 772–4, 776, 783, 798, 804–5, 1012–3).

The fourth general, Bandān-Jusnas b. al-Jalhān al-Rāzī, appears in *Nihāyat* only once and is already dealt with above concerning Firdawsī’s Bandā-Gušasp. One should add that, interestingly, in al-Dīnawarī’s account, a general called Yazd-Jušnas b. al-Ḥalabān (DN: 89) is responsible for the left wing of Bahrām’s army. The two names in al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* are written so similarly without diacritic marks that one can consider them as one and the same person.

The fifth general, Bandād-Yamīdīn b. Dāštān-Šāh appears in *Nihāyat* only once and is not attested in any other version. Therefore, the name might be the *Nihāyat*’s writer’s addition or reflect a unique source not used by the other writers. It seems that there was a quantity of nomenclature and other material circulating from one version to another, in this case between the versions of al-Dīnawarī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat*. This implies reworking of raw material from various sources rather than a straightforward dependency from one translation to another.

3.1.6. Presenting arguments to Hurmuzd IV

When Hurmuzd IV hears about Bahrām’s choices, he becomes bewildered. Bahrām has to answer two questions: Why he has chosen only 12,000 men? Why quadragenarians and not younger soldiers? The answer to the first question is found in four versions: al-Dīnawarī, Bal’amī, *Nihāyat*, and Firdawsī. In all of them, the answer follows a common motif. Bahrām evokes three examples from the legendary past in which an army of 12,000 men has been used:

Chart 11.

	1.	2.	3.
DN	Qābūs, Rustam, Māsafari’s fortress, 200,000 men (DN: 82)	Isfandiyār, Arjāsf (DN: 82)	Kay-Khusraw, Jūdarz, Siyāwuš, 300,000 men (DN: 82)
BL	Rustam, Māzandirān (BL II: 767)	Isfandiyār, Haft Khān in Brazen Hold (diz-i rūyīn) (BL II: 767)	-
FD	Kay-Kāwus, Rustam, Hāmāwarān (FD VII: 504–5)	Isfandiyār, Arjāsp (FD VII: 505)	Gūdarz, chief of the Kašwād, Siyāwuš (FD VII: 505)
NH	Qay-Qāwus, Rustam Māsafri, 100,000 men (NH: 353)	Jūdarz, Arjāsf, 100,000 men (NH: 353)	-

When analysing the chart above, the columns do not match entirely. It seems that Firdawsī has altered the chronology of the three examples and moved Isfandiyār and Arjāsp from the second place to the third, leaving Gūdarz and Siyāwuš in the second even though they should be in the third

place. I suggest this emendation for two reasons. First, Firdawsī's text is versified poetry and it is likely that he rephrased his sources rather freely. Second, this modification would allow it to match perfectly with the nomenclature in the other columns. For instance, the second column would be Isfandiyār and Arjāsf for al-Dīnawarī, Isfandiyār and Brazen Hold for Bal'amī, Isfandiyār, and Arjāsp for Firdawsī and Jūdarz and Arjāsf for *Nihāyat*. This adjustment is represented by a double arrow in the chart.

As a general remark, in this chart, as in chart 9 above (p. 98), a group of Bal'amī, Firdawsī, *Nihāyat* and al-Dīnawarī emerges. However, compared with chart 9, al-Dīnawarī's presence appears to be stronger since he presents the third legendary example which seems to be missing in *Nihāyat*'s text. What is more, the omission in both Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* of the third example seems to connect the two. However, juxtaposing Gūdarz and Arjāsp in the second column might be the *Nihāyat*'s writer's lapsus – the passage reads “*wa-in jūdarz inna-mā sāra ilā arjāsf*” – since according to the general understanding of the legendary events in the Persian literature, Gūdarz never attacked or helped Arjāsp. Who were these heroes of Iran's legendary national history to begin with?

First of all, they belong to the episodes on the wars between Iran and Turan. Kay-Kāwus (Qābūs) and Kay-Khusraw are immediate successors of Kay-Kawād from the Kayanid dynasty. Rustam, son of Zāl, saved Kay-Kāwus and restored his kingdom twice. First, Rustam saves him in Māzandirān where he performs his exploits at the Haft-Khān (“Seven stations”) and rescues Kay-Kāwus. The second time he saves Kay-Kāwus in Hāmāwarān. Siyāwuš is Kay-Kāwūs' son and crown prince, famous for his battle against the Turanian king Afrāsiyāb. Afrāsiyāb slays Siyāwuš but his son, Kay-Khusraw survives and is brought to the court in Iran. Afterward, Kay-Khusraw invades Turan with the help of Rustam and Gīw, son of Gūdarz and grandson of Kašwād, and gains the victory. Then, Kay-Khusraw indicates Luhrāsp, a distant relative of his, as his successor and withdraws from worldly affairs. Advanced in age, Kay-Khusraw leaves the kingship, and his son Guštāsp ascends the throne. Arjāsp, king of Turan, invades Iran and inflicts heavy losses on the country. Arjāsp's brother, Bīdarafš, kills Guštāsp's brother Zarīr. Finally, Bastūr, Zarīr's son, with the help of Isfandiyār, Guštāsp's eldest son and crown prince, defeats the Turanian army and kills Bīdarafš (Yarshater, 1983: 373–7).

According to the summary above, it becomes evident that all the data and nomenclature provided by al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat* make sense except the connection between Gūdarz and Arjāsp in *Nihāyat*'s text. Therefore, it is possible that *Nihāyat*'s writer fused the two anecdotes which are found separated in al-Dīnawarī's and Firdawsī's accounts. As a result, Bal'amī is the only version to omit the third example and the connection between Bal'amī and *Nihāyat*

vanishes. These small discrepancies put aside, it seems that all the versions draw their inspiration from the same source.

It is essential to look closely at these names for another reason. This is not the last time the wars between Iran and Turan are evoked, and some of the names appear again later in the story. For instance, when the spoils that Bahrām Čübīn gains are discussed, some versions mention Siyāwuš, Luhrāsp, and Afrāsiyāb. Bahrām's actions and the warfare are linked to earlier history, and one can see a continuity of the legendary Iranian past within the Bahrām Čübīn story. Another historical reference to the Sasanian past or an archaizing feature is mentioned when Bahrām and his men rebel. They mention a historical account including the former Sasanian king, Ardašīr. Both of these cases are dealt with below (3.2.4.5, 3.2.8).

Bahrām answers the question of why he has chosen only quadragenarians in three versions: Bal'amī (BL II: 767), Firdawsī (FD VII: 504–6) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 353). The semantic content of the answer, not the wording, is somewhat similar:

Chart 12.

	Why does Bahrām Čübīn choose quadragenarians?
BL	Hurmuzd IV asks: Why then did you not choose young men but men advanced in age? Bahrām replies: "Because war is about zeal (<i>ḥammiyyat</i>) and young men do not have zeal, wisdom (<i>khirad</i>) or experience (<i>tajruba</i>). They do not know the conventions (<i>rasm</i>) of war, nor how to take measures. Men advanced in age have both zeal and experience." (BL II: 767)
FD	You also said to me: "Quadragenarians / more than young men you searched for the battle"; "Quadragenarians have experience (<i>bā āzmāyiš</i>) / and in courage they are on a high level; They remember the mercy of bread and salt / and above their heads the sky has turned many times; of reputation, honour and slanderer's speech / he is dreaded, and for that, he will not turn back in a battle; an old man's soul is preoccupied / by thoughts of wife (<i>zan</i>), children (<i>zāda</i>) and family (<i>dūda</i>); a young man is easily fooled by the things he sees / and when he must wait he has no patience; he does not have wife (<i>zan</i>), children (<i>kūdak</i>) or sowed fields / and he knows nothing of what is valuable and worthless; because of the inexperience (<i>bī-āzmāyiš</i>), he cannot find wisdom (<i>khirad</i>) / he is unable to see to the very nature of things; if he turns out to be victorious in a battle / he becomes cheerful, laughs and delays his course; and he has no strength / and the enemy sees nothing but his turned back. (FD VII: 505–6)
NH	"As the king mentioned, I chose men of mature age (<i>al-kuhūl</i>) and left alone young and vigorous men. For the young men (<i>al-aḥdāt</i>) do not have the zeal of the matured men (<i>ḥammiyyat al-kuhūl</i>) nor have they their experience (<i>tajāruba-hum</i>); for the middle-aged man fights for his family (<i>ahli-hi</i>), child (<i>waladi-hi</i>), wife (<i>ḥarami-hi</i>) and religion. He considers the right of the king as obligatory for him in addition to [the obligation of] the pioussness regarding their religion and the practical intelligence (<i>'aql al-ḥunka</i>), and they disdain injustice." (NH: 353)

Here Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat* form a consistent group since other versions omit this detail. In the charts of narrative motifs of the Bahrām Čübīn story (see 3.1) these three sources often

appear together, although more frequently they appear accompanied by a fourth altering source. Within the group, one can note both lexical and semantic connections and overlaps.

Obvious lexical connections can be noted between Bal'amī and *Nihāyat*: the words denoting zeal (*ḥammiyyat*) and experience (*tajruba / tajārib*) are the same. It is important to note here, that al-Dīnawarī's text does not answer this question so *Nihāyat* cannot have al-Dīnawarī's text as a source. A weaker connection can be observed between Bal'amī and Firdawsī since both of them use the word wisdom (*khirad*). However, one word could be a mere coincidence. A stronger semantic connection appears between Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* because both of them mention family (*dūda / ahl*), wife (*zan / ḥaram*) and children (*zāda / kūdak / walad*). Regardless of these similarities, all three versions of this narrative motif represent their own independent versions. They do not match entirely lexically or semantically.

3.2. Revolt of Bahrām Čübīn and the preceding events – fighting Khāqān II and Khāqān III

The revolt of Bahrām Čübīn is a main turning point in the story. According to the corpus, it had varied causes. Some texts underline the role of the spoils and the disagreement about them and some others, such as al-Ṭabarī, dismiss the spoils completely. The revolt is perhaps the clearest example of the pervasive irregularity in the story.

In section 3.2, we will analyse some details of the narrative motifs of Bahrām Čübīn's fights against Khāqān II and Khāqān III and the revolt of Bahrām Čübīn (narrative blocks II, III, IV; 2.3). Bahrām Čübīn's revolt against Hurmuzd IV is perhaps the most important part of the story. It is both a dramatic turning point and the section in which the versions diverge the most. This is a summary of the events:

After choosing the 12,000 men, Bahrām Čübīn prepares to fight Khāqān II. After the king is defeated, Bahrām fights his son, Khāqān III. The spoils from these battles take a central role when something is missing. An important question arises: Did Bahrām Čübīn take some items from the spoils without Hurmuzd IV's permission? Whether or not Bahrām intentionally took something, Hurmuzd IV interprets the events in such a way. In many accounts, Hurmuzd IV's vizier plays an important role in convincing Hurmuzd IV of Bahrām Čübīn's malevolent intentions. After the vizier's persuasion, Hurmuzd IV becomes angry and disgusted with Bahrām and sends him insulting gifts. In reaction to this, Bahrām and his men rebel.

3.2.1. Khāqān II

Khāqān II is a central figure in the Bahrām Čübīn story and appears in all the versions except that of al-Maḡdisī. Bahrām Čübīn's most significant feat is his fighting with and victory over Khāqān II's considerably bigger army of 300,000–400,000 men.

Before the fight, four texts mention a letter that Khāqān II sends to Hurmuzd IV (ṬB I: 991, FD VII: 488, BKh: 98, AṬ: 364). In the letter, Khāqān II notifies the Persians that his army is approaching. He urges them to repair bridges over rivers and valleys for his army to be able to cross them and arrive in their country. He also urges them to build bridges over rivers that still have no bridges and do the same for the rivers and valleys leading to Byzantium since he is resolved to march there once he has conquered the land of Persia.

In most of the versions Bahrām kills Khāqān II with an arrow shot to the chest, except in the text of al-Ya'qūbī, who describes him being killed by a lance (*ḥarba*) (YQ: 189, DN: 84, ṬB I: 992, BL: 770–1, FD VII: 538–40, ṬB: 647, NH: 357, GD: 98, BKh: 98, MJ: 77, AṬ: 364). In the more copious sources,

such as al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālībī, and *Nihāyat*, Khāqān II's final moments are described similarly: when seeing his army being defeated, he is either about to call his horse to flee or rides a horse when Bahrām shoots the arrow. Khāqān II is mentioned in all the texts except al-Maqdisī. The Names of Khāqān II have some variation and the “Turk” or “Turkish” in the names refers to Turan:

Chart 13.

	Names for Khāqān II
QT	<i>Khāqān, Malik al-Turk</i> (QT: 664)
DN	<i>Šāhān-Šāh, Šāhān-Šāh al-Turk, Šāhib al-Turk, Malik al-Turk, Malik al-'Atrāk, Khāqān, al-Malik</i> (DN: 81–4)
YQ	<i>Šāba, Šāba Malik al-Turk</i> (YQ: 187–9)
ṬB	<i>Šāba Malik al-Turk, Malik al-Turk</i> (ṬB I: 991–2)
MS	<i>Šāba b. Šab, Šāba b. Šāb, Šiyāba b. Šīb, Šāna b. Šab, 'aẓīm min mulūk al-turk</i> (MS I: 312–3)
BL	<i>Sāba-Šāh, Sāba, Pīsar-i Khāqān, Malik-i Turk, Khāl-i Hurmuz, Sāba-yi Turk, Sāwa Malik Turk, Sāwa-Šāh, Malik-i Turk, Pīsar-i Malik-i Turk</i> (BL II: 760, 762, 768–72, 1011–3)
FD	<i>Sāwa-Šāh, Sāwa, Šāh-i Turkān, Šāh, Sāwa Sālār-i Čīn</i> (FD VII: 488, 490–1, 493, 496, 500–1, 504, 508–9, 513, 515–6, 518–23, 529–31, 534–5, 537–40, 543–5, 548, 550–1, 553, 556, 558, 573, 595, 603, 610; FD VIII: 29, 32, 35, 39, 61)
ṬB	<i>Šāba-Šāh, Khāqān</i> (ṬB: 642, 644–5, 647, 648–9)
NH	<i>Šāhān-Šāh, Šāhān-Šāh Malik al-Turk, Khāqān, Malik al-'Atrāk</i> (NH: 350–1, 355–7, 359–60)
GD	<i>Šāba b. Alast, Malik-i Turkistān</i> (GD: 98)
BKh	<i>Šāba, Khāqān</i> (BKh: 98)
MJ	<i>Sāw-Šāh, Sāba-Šāh</i> (MJ: 76)
AT	<i>Šāya malik al-Turk, Malik al-Turk</i> (AT: 364)

For comparative purposes, it is important to note that al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* do not use the *Sāba-Šāba-Sāwa*-pattern, but the names *Šāhān-Šāh* and *Malik al-Turk* instead. Ibn Qutayba also uses only the names *Khāqān* and *Malik al-Turk*. Therefore, Ibn Qutayba, al-Dīnawarī, and *Nihāyat* form a group distinct from the other versions.

Gardīzī's name *Šāba b. Alast* is noteworthy even though it belongs to the *Sāba-Šāba-Sāwa*-pattern since the latter part of the name is unique. The vocalization of the name is merely a supposition: it could be “*ulust*”, “*ilist*”, “*al-sitt*” or something else.⁴⁹ Gardīzī's name stands out as the most peculiar in the *Sāba-Šāba-Sāwa*-pattern. However, inconsistencies of this type, exceptions, and flexible use are often found in the corpus.

It is noteworthy that Firdawsī is the only text employing the name *Sālār-i Čīn*, leader of China. In the context of Firdawsī's time and in Persian literature in general, China (*Čīn*) is sometimes used as

⁴⁹ The name is written as الست in the text (GD: 98).

a synonym for Turan and east Transoxania, which is the case here (see 1.1, n. 1). This also becomes clear by the simultaneous use of *Šāh-i Turkān*, king of the Turanians, and *Sālār-i Čīn*, leader of China, for the same person.

3.2.2. Composition of the armies of Bahrām and Khāqān II

Different versions depict the composition of Khāqān II's and Bahrām's armies differently. The number of Bahrām Čübīn's men does not vary but in the longer versions such as Bal'amī, Firdawsī, *Nihāyat*, and al-Ṭa'ālībī the army's composition is described in greater detail and some differences occur. More variation is found in the description of Khāqān II's army. Al-Maqdisī, Gardīzī and Ibn al-Balkhī omit all the descriptions of the armies. In the chart below the various compositions of the armies are described:

Chart 14.

	Bahrām Čübīn's army	Khāqān II's army	Casualties in Khāqān II's army
QT	12,000 men (QT: 664)	-	-
DN	12,000 men (DN: 82)	300,000 (DN: 82), 40 000 men (DN: 83)	-
YQ	12,000 men (YQ: 188)	Diviners and sorcerers (' <i>arrāfūn wa-saḥara</i> ') (YQ: 189)	Bahrām and his army killed a great number of men (<i>khalq 'azīm</i>) (YQ: 189)
TB	12,000 men (TB I: 992)	300,000 (TB I: 991)	-
MS	12,000 men (MS I: 313)	400,000 men (MS I: 313)	-
BL	12,000 men (BL II: 766), 4,000 men on the right, 4,000 men on the left and 4,000 men in the middle (BL II: 1012)	300,000 (BL II: 766, 771), 40,000 bodyguards plus 260,000 soldiers, 200 war-elephants and 100 man-eating lions, archers and soldiers responsible for throwing naphtha (<i>naffātān</i>) (BL II: 770); 200,000 soldiers, 200 elephants (BL II: 1011)	Bolted elephants trample 30,000 Turanian soldiers to death (BL II: 770); elephants trample 30,000 Turanian soldiers; 30,000 soldiers are taken captive, 30 elephants killed on the battlefield and 30 are captured (BL II: 1012)
FD	12,000 (FD VII: 502), Īzad-Gušasp, Bandā-Gušasp, Ādhar-Gušasp, Yalān-Sīna, Hamidān-Gušasp lead different parts of the army (FD VII: 531–2)	Magicians (<i>jādūān</i>) (FD VII: 534), 400,000 men and 1,200 lions (FD VIII: 29)	Elephants trample Turanian soldiers (FD VII: 538)
NH	12,000 men (NH: 353); Mardān-Šīna al-Rūdhawandī controls the right wing, Yazd-Jušnaš the left wing, Bahrām controls the centre (NH: 356); Bahrām has 50 trustworthy men positioned behind him (NH: 356), soldiers throwing naphtha (NH: 357)	300,000 (NH: 350), 40,000 men on splendid horses in the front, 40,000 knights on the left and 40,000 knights on the right (NH: 356), elephants and lions (NH: 356–7)	Bolted elephants trample 30,000 Turanian soldiers to death (NH: 357)

TB	12,000 men (TB: 643), foot soldiers, elephants and men who were in charge of preventing soldiers from fleeing (TB: 646)	-	-
MJ	-	400,000 men (MJ: 76)	-
AI	12,000 men (AI: 364)	300,000 men (AI: 364)	-

The above chart is a bit confusing. The longest sources such as Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat*, seem to form a group since they share a core of the same information regarding Khāqān II's army and the casualties inflicted in the battle. Even though the numbers differ to some extent, all three have the same essential features: soldiers, lions, elephants, and elephants trampling Khāqān II's soldiers.

If we consider the numbers, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* seem to match more than Firdawsī and Bal'amī or Firdawsī and *Nihāyat*. Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* share 300,000 as the total number of men in Khāqān II's army, they both mention 40,000 as the number of a division and 30,000 as the number Khāqān II's soldiers trampled by the elephants. Interestingly, in another manuscript version of Bal'amī indicated by Rawšan, the number 200,000 is indicated for Khāqān II's troops (BL II: 1011).

Even though al-Dīnawarī's text is shorter and omits, for instance, the description of Khāqān II's casualties, one could include him in this group since he indicates the numbers 300,000 and 40,000 as well. As already mentioned, al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* are closely linked and the dependency is not a surprise. However, it is clear that in the Bahrām Čübīn story, *Nihāyat* must have used other sources as well.

Bal'amī, *Nihāyat*, Firdawsī and al-Ta'ālibī are linked because they all mention the war elephants. Noth recognizes the war elephants and tactics employed against them (such as chopping off the elephant's trunks) as a topos in *futūḥ* reports in connection with the Sasanians (Noth, 1994: 132–4). The Sasanians' use of war elephants is firmly attested in Roman and Byzantine sources and should be considered as genuinely historical fact (Scullard, 1974: 205–7). However, as the Arabic conquest narratives seems to have nothing to do with the stories of Bahrām Čübīn, there is no reason to suggest that the *futūḥ* reports have influenced the use of the elephants as a literary topos in Bal'amī, *Nihāyat*, Firdawsī and al-Ta'ālibī. Therefore, I suggest that the war elephants are an integral part of the Bahrām Čübīn story, i.e. they were part of the Pahlavi version(s).

Two groups can be formed according to the total number of Khāqān II's soldiers: al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, Bal'amī, *Nihāyat*, and Ibn al-Aṭīr indicate the number 300,000; and Mas'ūdī, Firdawsī, and *Mujmal* refer to the number 400,000. Mediaeval Arabic and Persian writers often use numbers

arbitrarily and freely, and we should be cautious in forming the two groups based solely on these two numbers.

3.2.3. Khāqān III

Khāqān III, son of Khāqān II, is a character of less importance than his father. He is omitted in the shorter versions, such as Ibn Qutayba, al-Maqdisī, Gardīzī, and *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh*. In the longer versions, Khāqān III is dealt with variously, and Firdawsī's account gives significantly more exposure to Khāqān III than other versions do.

Some versions describe the location of the battle between Khāqān III and Bahrām Čübīn: according to al-Dīnawarī, they meet on the shores of the great river (*šāṭi' al-nahr al-a'zam*) close to Termes (*al-tirmidh*; DN: 84); according to Bal'amī, at the gates of Balkh (BL: 772); in Firdawsī's account, Khāqān III crosses the river Oxus (*jayhūn*) and the battle takes place in the proximity of Balkh (FD VII: 551–2);⁵⁰ according to al-Ṭa'ālibī, Khāqān III's fortress is located in Baykand (TB: 653);⁵¹ and *Nihāyat* mentions Balkh but also Sijistān (*bilād al-Sijistān*), a city called Banān, Termes and, as al-Dīnawarī, the great river (*al-nahr al-a'zam*) (NH: 357–8).

In Firdawsī's version, before the fight Bahrām meets an astrologer who suggests that he avoid fighting on Wednesdays (*kih dar čāršanbad ma-zan gām rā*). Accordingly, Bahrām avoids fighting on Wednesdays and goes to a garden to pass the day, eat, drink wine and enjoy music. Khāqān III is informed by a spy about Bahrām's gathering and chooses 6,000 men for a surprise attack (FD VII: 553). However, Bahrām becomes aware of Khāqān III's attempt, and, with the help of Yalān-Sīna and Īzad-Gušasp, makes an opening in the garden's wall. Khāqān III's soldiers enter the garden one by one and are beaten. After this, Bahrām launches a surprise counter-attack and pursues Khāqān III (FD VII: 553–5). Al-Ṭa'ālibī's version is very similar but less detailed (TB: 652–3); Wednesday as an ominous day is not mentioned.

On this occasion, Bahrām and Khāqān III have a short dialogue in which Bahrām abuses and ridicules Khāqān III who replies by criticizing Bahrām's thirst for blood. This motif appears in Bal'amī (BL II: 772), Firdawsī (FD VII: 555–7) and al-Ṭa'ālibī (TB: 653). In al-Ṭa'ālibī's text, Khāqān III speaks to Bahrām as follows:

⁵⁰ Interestingly, in Bal'amī's account Khāqān II, not Khāqān III, traverses the river Oxus (*az jayhūn bi-gudhašt*) and arrives in Balkh (BL II: 760).

⁵¹ Earlier in al-Ṭa'ālibī's account, the river Oxus (*jayhūn*) is mentioned (TB: 650), but Bahrām Čübīn traverses it, not Khāqān III.

Are you a devil or a man? When comes the time when you are satisfied with our flesh (*hūminā*) and when our blood quenches your thirst? You are now between two choices (*bayna amrayn*): Either you confront (*tuqāri'unī*) me and kill me [since] the blood of a man like me is not shed in vain (*lā yahdiru*), or either I fight a forced fight and engage all my efforts possible to kill you (TB: 653).

A common motif in nearly all versions having Khāqān III is his being besieged in a fortress. In Firdawsī's account the fortress is called Āwāza, and in *Nihāyat*'s text Barza (NH: 358). Al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 189), al-Ṭabarī (TB I: 993), al-Mas'ūdī (MS: 313), Bal'amī (BL II: 772), al-Ṭa'ālibī (TB: 653–4) and Ibn al-Aṭīr (AT: 364) mention the fortress but do not name it. Interestingly, in al-Dīnawarī's long and detailed text the fortress and siege are completely missing. In al-Ṭa'ālibī's account Khāqān III's unnamed fortress is located in the city of Baykand – the only mention of the city in the corpus – which might constitute a concealed link to Firdawsī's text. That is to say, that in the translation of the anonymous work *Hudūd al-Ālam* the name *Āwāza-yi Paykand* is mentioned (Barthold, 1937: 56, 73, 185–6, 211) and, according to Barthold, the meaning of the word Āwāza is “lake, swamp” (ibid. 185–6). As the name containing both Āwāza and Baykand exists separately from Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī, it forms a connection between the two. Furthermore, it is plausible to suggest this connection, as we know that Firdawsī's and al-Ṭa'ālibī's texts are largely based on the same sources (1.6.9).

According to Firdawsī's account, after days of siege, Bahrām addresses Khāqān III and suggests that he ask for protection from Hurmuzd IV. Khāqān III agrees, and Bahrām composes a letter on his behalf to Hurmuzd IV. When Khāqān III receives Hurmuzd IV's assurance of protection, he comes out from the castle and acts arrogantly towards Bahrām. Bahrām loses his temper, strikes Khāqān and confines him in a tent. Hurmuzd IV's vizier, Khurrād-Burzīn, describes Bahrām's behaviour in negative terms and states that his wisdom has become less than a wing of a gnat (FD VII: 566). The chief scribe and Khurrād-Burzīn talk to Bahrām, who realizes that he acted wrongly (*bi-dānist bahrām k-ān būd zišt*); he is regretful and tries to apologize by sending Khāqān III a golden saddle (*zarrīn sitām*) and an Indian sword with golden sheath. The gifts are turned down. Bahrām, fearing for his reputation, solicits Khāqān not to inform Hurmuzd IV of the incident (FD VII: 567). After an exchange of words, Bahrām is about to lose his temper again, but Khurrād-Burzīn calms him down (FD VII: 568, 570). After these incidents, Khurrād-Burzīn, the chief scribe, and Moubads explain everything to Hurmuzd IV in a letter (FD VII: 571). Khāqān III's asking protection is mentioned by al-

Ya'qūbī (YQ: 189), al-Dīnawarī (DN: 84), Bal'amī (BL: 772, 1012), Firdawsī (FD VII: 562), al-Ṭa'ālibī (TB: 654) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 358) but the conflict between him and Bahrām Čūbīn is described in detail only in Firdawsī's text (FD VII: 565–71). Hurmuzd IV receiving Khāqān III at his court and the play of courtesy between the two is mentioned in al-Dīnawarī (DN: 84), Bal'amī (BL II: 773, 1012), Firdawsī (FD VII: 573–5), al-Ṭa'ālibī (TB: 655–6) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 359)

As with Khāqān II, the name of Khāqān III has variations in different versions: Khāqān III is absent in the accounts of Ibn Qutayba, al-Maqdisī, Gardīzī and *Mujmal*.

Chart 15.

	Names for Khāqān III
DN	<i>Yaltakīn, Yartakīn, Yartaqīn</i> (DN: 84)
YQ	<i>Barmūdha b. Šāba</i> (YQ: 189)
TB	<i>Barmūdha b. Šāba</i> (TB I: 993)
MS	<i>Barmūda b. Šāba, Šiyāba, Šāba</i> (MS I: 313)
BL	<i>Pisar-i Malik-i Turk, Pisar-i Sāba-Šāh, Khāqān-i Turk, Pisar-i Sāwa, Pisar-i Sāwa-Šāh</i> (BL II: 772–4, 1012–3)
NH	<i>Yartaghīn, Yartaghīn bin Šāhān-Šāh, Yartaghīn-Šāh, Ibn Khāla, Ibn al-Malik</i> (NH: 352, 357–9)
FD	<i>Parmūda, Šāh-i Turkān wa Čīn, Parmūda-yi Turk, Khāqān, Khāqān-i Čīn, Sipahdār wa-Sālār-i Turkān wa Čīn</i> (FD VII: 524, 546–7, 550–5, 557–8, 562–3, 565–6, 573–5, 577–81, 595, 608, 610)
TB	<i>Barmūdha b. Šāba Šāh</i> (TB: 648–57)
BKh	<i>Barmūdha</i> (BKh: 98)
AT	<i>Barmūda b. Šāya</i> (AT: 364)

Regarding the names of Khāqān III, one can distinguish three groups. That of *Barmūdha*, *Parmūda*, etc. supported by al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, Ibn al-Balkhī and Ibn al-Aṭīr; that of *Yaltakīn*, *Yartakīn*, etc. supported by al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*. However, Bal'amī stands apart from these two groups by not naming Khāqān III at all. In other words he uses only names like son of the king of Turan or son of Sāba-Šāh. This is remarkable because one would expect Bal'amī – as a long and detailed text – to use either one of the name patterns or at least give a name to Khāqān III.

3.2.4. Stealing from the spoils

Taking from the spoils is a turning point in the story. Different versions deal with this detail differently. Some of the versions explicitly mention Bahrām taking from the spoils, one or several times; other versions do not mention this at all. In the latter case, it is only Hurmuzd IV's vizier or Khāqān III who declares that part of the spoils are missing. In the versions where stealing is not mentioned, it is unclear whether stealing occurred or whether it was only the vizier's or Khāqān III's slander.

3.2.4.1. Al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya' qūbī and al-Ṭabarī

In al-Ya' qūbī, stealing from the spoils is not mentioned and it is Khāqān III who denounces Bahrām (YQ: 189). In al-Dīnawarī, stealing is not mentioned but the vizier denounces Bahrām (DN: 85). In al-Ṭabarī's versions spoils have no role in the rebellion, nor has the vizier or Khāqān III. Curiously, later in the story, Khusraw II sends his general called Ādhīn-Jušnas to fight Bahrām Čūbīn. Both the names of this man (chart 17, p. 117) and the fact that Khusraw II sends him to fight Bahrām have a resemblance to some other versions where Hurmuzd IV sends his vizier to apologize to Bahrām (YQ: 190, DN: 86–7, BL: 779–81, 1014, FD VII: 617–23, NH: 361–3).

3.2.4.2. Bal'amī

Bal'amī's text has the most detailed and manifold description of taking from the spoils. Here we have to take into account the parallel manuscripts indicated by Rawšan's edition since they contain significantly different material from the main text. Considering the two manuscript versions Bal'amī's text offers two conflicting versions of the events.

In Bal'amī's main version, the text reads that after Khāqān II's death Bahrām sent to Hurmuzd IV the requested items but other things that he ought to share with his men, he set apart and distributed among them (BL II: 771). Therefore, Bal'amī explicitly states that Bahrām took some of the spoils. On this occasion, no specific items are mentioned.

Then Bahrām Čūbīn appoints his general Mardān-Šāh to deliver the captives and the spoils including gold, silver, gems, a golden throne, a crown, other items, weapons and carpets to the king Hurmuzd IV (BL II: 772–3). At this point, Hurmuzd IV treats Khāqān III hospitably for forty days, gives him robes of honour, many other gifts, and they agree to peace (BL II: 773). Hurmuzd IV also writes a letter to Bahrām Čūbīn and asks him to treat Khāqān III well although the content of the letter is not further described. Bal'amī's main text reads that Mardān-Šāh, a general of Bahrām Čūbīn, delivers Khāqān III to Bahrām who should escort him back to his country. When returning, Mardān-Šāh carries a message (*khabar bar dāšt*) and says:

The spoils that are in my possession nobody has taken from me (*īn ghanīmat-hā kih bā man ast kas az man nasitada ast*). O king, send somebody to carry the spoils away from me (BL II: 774).

However, it is not clear whether Mardān-Šāh refers to himself or whether he delivers a message from Bahrām Čūbīn. If the message is from Bahrām Čūbīn, it tells a lie because the text confirms that he has taken from the spoils earlier. If the message is from Mardān-Šāh, he may want to

reassure Hurmuzd IV that he has not taken anything from the spoils and if something is missing it was somebody other than he.

The parallel manuscript in Rawšan's edition tells another story: After the death of Khāqān II, Bahrām gathers all the riches (*khwāsta-hā*) and gives some of it to the army (*barkhī bih sipāh bakhšīd*) (BL II: 1012). However, unlike in the main version, the text does not describe Bahrām sending anything to Hurmuzd IV at this point. The sending takes place only after Khāqān III is defeated, not before. In the same manuscript, the spoils are described after the defeat of Khāqān III including a crown (*tāj*), throne (*takht*), golden items (*zarrīna-hā*), silver items, (*sīmīna-hā*), carpets, utensils (*ālat*) and elephants. Then, for the second time, Bahrām takes some of the spoils for himself and distributes from them to the army as well (*bi-har sipāh bi-dād*) (BL II: 1012). The rest of the items are loaded on the elephants, mules, and camels.

Interestingly, in the parallel manuscript, Bal'amī states that after Hurmuzd IV had treated Khāqān III hospitably for forty days, he actually returns to Khāqān III and his companions all the items they want, whether those brought by Mardān-Šāh in convoy, or those put aside by Bahrām and his army (*har čih bahrām wa sipāh bih qismat girifta būdand*). Hurmuzd IV orders that all they want should be given back which indicates that at this point Hurmuzd IV had prior knowledge of Bahrām taking from the spoils (BL II: 1012). The motif is unique, and nothing comparable is mentioned in the other versions.

In the parallel manuscript of Rawšan's edition, Hurmuzd IV sends a letter to Bahrām Čūbīn and orders him to escort Khāqān III back to his kingdom. As stated above, the main text mentions the letter (BL II: 773) but does not describe its content. The parallel manuscript describes the letter as follows:

Show dignity and modesty towards him. Grant him anything he wants from the totality of the items that you or your army have shared (*bih qismat bih tū resīda ast yā bih sipāh*) from [his] military camp. Do not withhold anything from him until you escort him to his country. Bring him back to his kingdom magnificently and respectfully. Proceed in such a manner that he will send a letter of gratitude to me (BL II: 1012–3).

Here again, Hurmuzd IV is aware of the missing spoils since he acknowledges Bahrām Čūbīn and his men putting aside from the spoils. In addition to these passages where taking from the spoils is mentioned, later in the text Hurmuzd IV's vizier denounces Bahrām to the king (BL II: 774).

3.2.4.3. Firdawsī

Firdawsī's text is less focused on the spoils. After the death of Khāqān II, Hurmuzd IV states that spoils found on the battleground can be distributed among the troops, but Khāqān II's treasury should be sent to the court. The text also confirms that Bahrām acted accordingly (*ghanīmat bibakhšīd pas bar sipāh / juz-āz ganj-i nāpākdil sāwa-šāh*) (FD VII: 551). In Hurmuzd IV's letter to Bahrām after Khāqān III's defeat, Hurmuzd IV asks him to send over all the spoils. In return, Hurmuzd IV sends gifts such a robe of honour (*khil'at*) and a belt encrusted with gems (*kamar khwāst pur gawhar-i šāhwār*), an ornamented golden saddle and a purse of coins. Hurmuzd IV also calls Bahrām the greatest of the champions (*mihtarān-i pahlawānān*) (FD VII: 563). In contrast to the events that follow in the story, on this occasion, Bahrām is obedient and fulfils Hurmuzd IV's orders perfectly.

Firdawsī describes Bahrām and his men looting the Āwāza fortress of the Turanians and explicitly states that Bahrām took some of the spoils. His action was not out of joy (*guššī*) or bravery (*gund-āwuri*), but he sought consciously for sovereignty (*dāwuri*) (FD VII: 573). Bahrām takes a pair of Siāwuš's earrings, a pair of boots (*dū mūzah*) with golden and jewel ornaments and two bolts of golden Yemeni cloth (*dū burda yamānī*). These items he does not include in the records (FD VII: 573, 576). Then Bahrām charges his general Īzad-Gušasp to choose 1,000 men and deliver the spoils along with the prisoners to the court of Hurmuzd IV in a convoy that amounts to 30 caravans. Later in the text, the spoils are referred to as 50,000 packages and 100 treasures (FD VII: 575).

In Firdawsī's account, it is not ambiguous whether Bahrām took something from the spoils consciously or not. Informing Hurmuzd IV about the missing spoils occurs twice: First, Hurmuzd IV's vizier indicates that some of the spoils are missing and sets forth a suspicion that Bahrām might be untrustworthy; then, a letter from the chief scribe arrives saying that Bahrām took a belt, earrings and a Yemeni cloth from the spoils (FD VII: 576). Khāqān III confirms this information to Hurmuzd IV as well (FD VII: 577).

3.2.4.4. Nihāyat, al-Ta'ālibī, and Gardīzī

Nihāyat does not explicitly mention Bahrām taking from the spoils. It is only Hurmuzd IV's vizier and his comments that bring the matter up (NH: 359). Therefore, it remains uncertain whether taking from the spoils occurred or whether it was just the vizier's slander.

In al-Ta'ālibī's text, stealing from the spoils is not mentioned but an anonymous person, who can be identified with the vizier in other versions, indicates that some of the spoils are missing (TB: 657). Then, the missing spoils are confirmed by the discrepancies in the inventory lists and by Khāqān III's affirmation. In this sense, Khāqān III plays a corroborative role in Hurmuzd IV's suspicions.

In Gardīzī's account stealing from the spoils does not occur and Hurmuzd IV's vizier is the single informant of this supposed event. More than in other accounts, it is clear that the vizier's motives are malevolent since the text describe him as having rancour towards Bahrām (*bā bahrām čūbīn bih kina buwadh*) and being envious of him (*ādhīn-jušnas rā ḥasad āmadh*) (GD: 99). In the other versions, this motif does not exist.

3.2.4.5. Legendary Turanian kings and the spoils

The narrative motif evoking the past Turanian kings appears in the context of the spoils. This motif appears in the texts of al-Mas'ūdī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī and Gardīzī. In some versions, the kings are mentioned after the fight against Khāqān II, and in some versions only after Khāqān III's defeat. The legendary Turanian kings give an historical context to the events. Similar references to the legendary past can be found in the passages where Bahrām presents arguments to Hurmuzd IV on why he has chosen 12,000 men and mentions Rustam, Isfandiyār, Gūdarz and others as an example (3.1.6) and also when Bahrām's men mention the king Ardašīr and his vizier as an example from the past (3.2.8). In the chart below the passages on the legendary Turanian kings are presented:

Chart 16.

	Passages
MS	He [Bahrām] took some items that were in possession of Šāba [Khāqān II] including heirlooms from the [previous] kings. For instance, wealth and jewels that were in the treasuries of Farāsiyāb [Afrāsiyāb], which he had taken from Siāwakhš, and the heirlooms kept by the Turanian king Luhrāsf taken initially from Bastās's [Arjāsp] treasuries from the city of Balkh; and other things from the treasuries of the ancient Turanian kings (MS I: 313).
FD	From the times of Arjāsp and Afrāsiyāb / coins and pearls from the sea Also, there were the things from a mine / that was of heavenly origin In Āwāza castle there were treasures / whose fame is new in the world Among these was Siyāwaš's belt / in each boss [of it] were three pieces of gems Siyāwaš's earrings also were there, in the whole world / no commoner or nobleman has ever possessed such ones Kay-Khusraw had given them to Luhrāsp / and Luhrāsp gave them to Guštāsp Then Arjāsp took them and placed in the castle (<i>diz</i>) / in the times that no one can remember (FD VII: 571–2).
TB	Bahrām entered the castle (<i>al-ḥiṣn</i>) and opened the treasuries. There was an innumerable amount of wealth, precious objects, amazing arms, and other objects. [For instance] there were treasures of Afrāsiyāb and Arjāsf [Arjāsp] and crown, belt, and earrings of Siyāwuš (TB: 655).
GD	He [Bahrām] took the entire treasury of Šāba [Khāqān II] and the things found were sent to Hurmuzd IV. [They included] things Afrāsiyāb had taken from Siyāwuš like jewels (<i>jawāhir</i>), vessels (<i>zarā'if</i>) and other things and the things that Arjāsp took from the treasuries of Luhrāsp and brought to the land of Turan (GD: 98–99).

All four versions share the core motif, but on a closer look they differ, and the general picture is somewhat confusing. The texts refer to a group of names and set of chains of transmission through which the riches have passed over time. Czeglédý notes that Afrāsiyāb's treasures are mentioned in *Jāmāsp-nāmag* in one of the three prophecies which are thought to deal with Bahrām Čübīn (1958: 38; 1.3.4).

Al-Mas'ūdī presents two chains of transmission: from Siyāwuš to Afrāsiyāb and from Arjāsp to Luhrāsp. Firdawsī presents one long chain of transmission: from Kay-Khusraw to Luhrāsp, Guštāsp and Arjāsp and mentions Afrāsiyāb and Siyāwuš by name. Al-Ṭa'ālibī omits the chain of transmission and only mentions Afrāsiyāb, Arjāsp, and Siyāwuš. Gardīzī, like al-Mas'ūdī, presents two chains of transmission: from Luhrāsp to Arjāsp and from Siyāwuš to Afrāsiyāb. In addition, one should note that al-Mas'ūdī and Gardīzī present this narrative motif in connection with the war against Khāqān II, whereas Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī mention it after Khāqān III's capture. Of the four sources, al-Mas'ūdī and Gardīzī seem to have the most explicit connection: they both present two chains of transmission, have the same names and locate the motif after Khāqān II's defeat.

This motif reveals some interesting connections. First of all, it is striking that this motif is found in al-Mas'ūdī's and Gardīzī's versions, which are rather short, and, conversely, that the succession of Turanian kings is omitted in the longer sources, such as Bal'amī and *Nihāyat*. In the chart of the narrative motifs as well as in the analysis above, one can see that the longer versions of Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat*, occasionally including al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭa'ālibī, often form a group. Here, this is not the case. This might indicate that al-Mas'ūdī and Gardīzī have had more material on Bahrām Čübīn at their disposal than they have transmitted and worked selectively on the material.

3.2.5. Hurmuzd IV's vizier's role

A common motif in many versions is Hurmuzd IV's vizier, who, envious of Bahrām, slanders him and somehow affects Hurmuzd IV's perception of Bahrām's actions. This motif appears in al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 189), al-Dīnawarī (DN: 85), al-Mas'ūdī (MS I: 313), Bal'amī (BL II: 774, 1013), Firdawsī (FD VII: 576–7), al-Ṭa'ālibī (ṬB: 657), *Nihāyat* (NH: 359), and Gardīzī (GD: 99). In the case of al-Ya'qūbī, the vizier is absent but Khāqān III denounces Bahrām's actions, and Hurmuzd IV's trustees (*umanā'*) confirm his information. In al-Ṭa'ālibī's text, the vizier is also absent, but the denouncement is uttered by an anonymous person (*qāla ba'du-hum*) of the court. The names of the vizier have some variation:

Chart 17.

	Transliteration of the vizier's names	The names written without diacritic marks
DN	<i>Yazdān-Jušnas</i> , <i>Yazdān wazīr</i> , <i>Yazdān</i> (DN: 85–7)	بردان حسنس
YQ	<i>Ādhīn-Jušnas</i> (YQ: 191)	ادس حسنس
ṬB	<i>Ādhīn-Jušnas</i> (ṬB I: 995)	ادس حسنس
MS	<i>Arīkhsīs al-Khūzī</i> , <i>Arīkhsīs al-Khūrī</i> , <i>Artīhsīs</i> (MS I: 313)	ارحسبس الحوری
BL	<i>Yazdān-Bakhšiš</i> (BL II: 774–5, 779–81, 783, 1013–4)	بردان بحس
FD	<i>Āyīn-Gušasp</i> (FD VII: 576, 611, 616–20, 622–3 FD VIII: 36)	ایس گسپ
ṬB	<i>Ādhīn-Kušasb</i> (ṬB: 659)	ادس کسپ
NH	<i>Yazdān-Jušnas</i> , <i>Yazdān-Jušnaš</i> , <i>Yazdād-Jušnaš</i> , <i>Yazdān-Jušīs</i> (NH: 359, 361–3)	بردان حسنس
GD	<i>Ādhīn-Jušnas Jūrī</i> , <i>Azihsīs Hūrī</i> , <i>Arihsīs</i> , <i>Arihsīs</i> (GD: 99) ⁵²	ادس حسنس حوری ، ارحسبس

First, we should note that al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī do not identify *Ādhīn-Jušnas* as Hurmuzd IV's vizier. However, he occupies the same narrative function as the vizier in the other versions. For instance, in many versions (DN: 86–7, BL II: 779–81, 1014, FD VII: 617–23, NH: 361–3) Hurmuzd IV sends his vizier to apologize to Bahrām (see 3.2.10). Al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī, instead, send *Ādhīn-Jušnas* to fight Bahrām Čūbīn. As we can see in the above chart, the name also corresponds to other characters who are identified as Hurmuzd IV's vizier in other versions.

When the viziers' names in the above chart are compared, it seems that the variations in the written form can largely be attributed to the use of diacritics and the negligence of the copyist or, perhaps, the editor. All the names bear similarities even though they do not entirely match. Based on the names written without diacritics, the individual names can be divided into three groups: 1) *Yazdān-*, *Āyīn-*, *Ādhīn-*, *Ar-* and *Az-*; 2) *Jušnas*, *Gušasp*, *-īkhsīs* and *-ihsīs*; 3) *al-Khūrī* and *Jūrī* which appear only in al-Mas'ūdī's and Gardīzī's accounts. If one leaves the third part out, the names resemble each other substantially, especially the second group. According to these groups, one can further establish the following four divisions. The picture that emerges is rather confusing and the same text can be included in more than one division:

The first group is formed by Al-Dīnawarī, *Nihāyat*, and Bal'amī who share the name *Yazdān* although the ending is different. The difference in the ending (*Jušnas/Bakhšiš*) can be explained by different use of the diacritics.

⁵² The vocalization of the names is uncertain because the diacritic marks are missing in some of the manuscript variants and one of the variants is written as "ارحسبس" which allows multiple possibilities.

- If we suppose that *Ādhīn* is an Arabized form of the Persian *Āyīn*, we can regroup these two. Therefore, al-Ṭabarī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭaʿālibī, and Gardīzī share the beginning of the name and form a group. Of these four, Firdawsī and al-Ṭaʿālibī have practically identical names.
- The third group is formed by al-Masʿūdī and Gardīzī who seem to refer to the same name even though the names do not match entirely. However, we should note that Gardīzī's *Aziḥsīs Ḥūrī* appears only in a footnote of the edited text and on other occasions Gardīzī uses the form *Ādhīn-Juṣnas Jūrī*. In other words, there is an overlap between the two.
- As the name *Juṣnas* is an Arabized form of *Guṣasp* (Tafazzolī, 1988: 260), al-Dīnawarī, *Nihāyat*, al-Ṭabarī, Gardīzī and Firdawsī are connected. They form the fourth group.

3.2.6. Hurmuzd IV's vizier's denouncing sentence

A denunciation by the vizier is a common motif in the versions where the vizier appears. The uttered phrase affects Hurmuzd IV's perception of Bahrām Čūbīn's actions and turns him against Bahrām. In some versions, such as al-Masʿūdī and Gardīzī, the vizier is depicted as a malevolent person. According to al-Masʿūdī, the vizier is envious of Bahrām (*ḥasada-hu*) and attempts to show Bahrām's disloyalty (*khiyānat*) and tyranny (*istibdādi-hi*) to Hurmuzd IV by alluding that there are possibly more jewels and wealth hidden. He provokes Hurmuzd IV against Bahrām (*aghrā-hu bi-hi*) (MS I: 313). In Gardīzī's text, the vizier hates Bahrām, envies his accomplishments and besmears Bahrām's reputation (*ṣūrat-i ān zišt kard*) by showing a diamond covered boot found among the spoils (GD: 99).

In al-Dīnawarī's, Bal'amī's, Firdawsī's, and *Nihāyat*'s versions, Bahrām suspects the vizier, directly or indirectly, of being responsible for the schemes that turned Hurmuzd IV's praise to disdain. However, this motif appears after Bahrām received the insulting gifts and the letter from Hurmuzd IV (see 3.2.7).

In al-Dīnawarī's versions, Bahrām is sure that the gifts and the letter from Hurmuzd IV are the work of slanderers (*utiya min al-wuṣāt*) (DN: 85). According to Bal'amī, Bahrām suspects that the vizier, who envies him, should be blamed, not Hurmuzd IV (*ū rā andar īn gunāh nīst*) (BL: 775). In Firdawsī's version, Bahrām suspects that at the court of Hurmuzd IV some of his enemies machinate against him. He cannot believe that the idea originated from the king because his military accomplishments are far too significant to be dismissed so easily (FD VII: 582). In *Nihāyat*, Bahrām claims to know that, instead of the king himself, his enemies and enviers are behind the plot and

that they have planted these ideas in Hurmuzd IV's mind (NH: 360). In the chart below, the denouncing sentences are described:

Chart 18.

	Denouncing sentence with translation and transliteration
DN	How great was the table [of exposed spoils] from which this morsel comes! (<i>mā kāna a'ḡam al-mā'idat allatī minhā hādhihi al-luqmat</i>)(DN: 85).
MS	It was greater, for the horse, than these leftovers (<i>a'ḡam li-faras hādhihi zallat</i>) (MS I: 313). / It was greater than these leftovers (<i>a'ḡam hādhihi zallat</i>)(al-Mas'ūdī, 1964: 272).
BL	O king, this is a lot, but it is only a fraction of what Bahrām took for himself from the banquet (<i>ay malik, in bisyār ast valīkin in yakī navāla ast az ānkih bahrām bar girifta ast az sūrī</i>) (BL II: 774).
FD	The excellent banquet [of the exposed spoils], its story was like this / thou shall know that the table of it was a thing never seen before (<i>bih sūrī kih dastān-aš čunīn būd / čunān dān kih khwān-aš naw-āyīn būd</i>) (FD VII: 576).
ṬB	What a great wedding feast it must have been! [Of it only] these leftovers (<i>a'ḡam bi-'urs hādhihi zallatu-hu</i>) (ṬB: 657).
NH	How great was that table [of exposed spoils] from which this morsel comes! (<i>mā kāna a'ḡam tilka al-mā'idat allatī kānat min-hā hādhihi al-luqmat</i>) (NH: 359).
GD	This boot has been found with its pair. Bahrām split all the riches he found in two; one half he kept for himself and another half he sent to you. The proof of it is this one boot (<i>in mūza dū pāy rā buwadha ast kī yāfta-and wa-bahrām hama' māl kī yāft bih dū nīma karda ast. nīmī khūdh bāz girift wa-nīmī bih tū firistādh, dalāl-i in yak pāy-i mūza</i>) (GD: 99).

In addition to the sentences above, al-Ya'qūbī mentions Hurmuzd IV's trustees speaking in a situation that occupies the same narrative function as the vizier's utterance in other versions. The vizier is absent but Khāqān III denounces Bahrām's actions, and the trustees (*umanā'*) confirm his information:

Khāqān III informs him [Hurmuzd IV] about Bahrām and the immense wealth and treasures [that] he [Bahrām] concealed from his trustees (*umanā'i-hi*). His [Hurmuzd IV's] trustees confirmed the same information and that he [Bahrām] sent him [Hurmuzd IV] only a small fraction of the whole (*qalīl min kaṭīr*) (YQ: 189).

If one analyses the above sentences, some connections can be seen. Lexically and semantically there is a strong connection between al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*. The phrase is the same, which should not be surprising since the connection of al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* has already been discussed above (2.1.9).

A completely new connection appears between al-Mas'ūdī and al-Ṭa'ālibī. Al-Ṭa'ālibī's phrase might explain al-Mas'ūdī's slightly obscure phrase: *bi-'urs* makes more sense than *li-furs*, which seem to be an ill-fitting insertion. This is the reason why I have exceptionally indicated a similar phrase in

Muḥyī al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd’s edition (al-Mas’ūdī, 1964: 272), which, by omitting *li-furs*, is more understandable: this might be a lapse of the copyist’s hand attributed to diacritic marks of the letters or a result of the editor’s work.

On a lexical level, Bal’amī’s and Firdawsī’s accounts are connected by the word “*sūrī*,” whereas semantically they have almost nothing in common. One can establish a weak connection between them. Firdawsī probably reworked his material considerably to fit the metrical and poetical requirements which dissociates his text from his sources perhaps more than is the case in other versions.

Regarding al-Ṭa’ālibī’s phrase, it is important to take into account the reactions it provokes. The vizier’s phrase leads to accusations of misconduct and fraud by Bahrām, since there is a disparity between the list of items transmitted by the head of intelligence (*ṣāḥib al-khabar*) and the actual items found: the earrings of Siāwuš (*qirṭā sīāwuš*) and his golden and jewellery encrusted boots (*khuffa-hu al-dhahab wa-al-muraṣṣa’*) are missing. Khāqān III also confirms that Bahrām took from his and his father’s riches (TB: 657). Here an obvious connection with Firdawsī’s account appears since he mentions Siāwuš’s earrings and a pair of boots with golden and jewel ornaments as well (FD VII: 572–3, 576).

At first sight, Gardīzī’s version seems to provide a completely new content compared to the other versions. However, taking into account al-Ṭa’ālibī’s and Firdawsī’s accounts, the prominence of the boot becomes understandable and connects with the broader framework of Bahrām Čūbīn’s story. It is noteworthy that for a rather short version, Gardīzī emphasizes the vizier’s utterance considerably in comparison with the other versions. As discussed above, this might indicate that the shorter versions, Gardīzī included, had more extensive material at their disposal which they, for one reason or another, abbreviated to meet their requirements.

We can divide the sentences according to the semantic meaning as well. It appears that al-Ya’qūbī, Bal’amī and Gardīzī refer to the spoils in a concrete manner and name Bahrām as the one who stole from the spoils. As for al-Dīnawarī, al-Mas’ūdī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa’ālibī, and *Nihāyat*, they refer to the spoils allusively which contributes both to the uncertainty about whether or not Bahrām took something from the spoils and to the assumed villainy of the vizier.

Once the vizier has uttered his phrase, Hurmuzd IV reacts immediately. In the chart below, we can see how Hurmuzd IV’s reactions are described in different versions:

Chart 19.

	Description of Hurmuzd IV's immediate reaction
DN	Hurmuzd IV is struck by anger and fury against Bahrām which makes him forget Bahrām's good deeds (<i>wa-dakhala hurmuz min-hā al-ghaḍab wa-l-ghayz 'alā bahrām mā ansā-hu ḥusn balā'i-hi</i>). (DN: 85).
BL	Hurmuzd IV was impressed by this speech, and he got angry with Bahrām (<i>hurmuz rā īn sakhun andar dil uftād wa-bar bahrām khašm girift</i>) (BL II: 774).
FD	Hurmuzd IV says that Bahrām deviated from the right path and mistreated Khāqān III as if he was equal to Khāqān III's noble origins. He took the earrings as if he was a ruler. Hurmuzd IV concludes that Bahrām has lost all his good deeds and sense of justice (FD VII: 577). The king was not satisfied with Bahrām and his vehement actions and his mind was filled with sadness. First, for Khāqān III's injuries caused by the anger that overtook Bahrām and secondly, because Bahrām took [from the spoils] things that he was not authorized [to take] and showed his audacity (FD VII: 579–80).
TB	Hurmuzd IV was distressed (<i>fa-stawḥaša hurmuz</i>) (TB: 657).
NH	When the king heard this, he suspected the trustworthiness of Bahrām and thought that the matters were as Yazdān-Jušnas had said and that Bahrām had sent him but a small fraction of the spoils. Hurmuzd IV becomes very angry with Bahrām, and he forgets, in his intense fury, Bahrām's good deeds, his performances in this aspect and his great ability (NH: 359).
GD	That became troublesome to Hurmuzd IV, and he got angry (<i>hurmuz rā ān dušwār āmadh wa khašm girift</i>) (GD: 99)

Except for the apparent connection between al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*, no other lexical links can be noted. However, the general idea is the same: Hurmuzd IV is angry or dissatisfied with Bahrām's behaviour. Slight differences in nuance can be observed. Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālībī use milder expressions such as "dissatisfied" (*na-khušnūd*), "filled with sadness" (*pur az dūd*) and "get distressed" (*istawḥaša*) whereas other texts speak about fury and angry.

It appears that Bal'amī and Gardīzī are linked by the expression "get angry" (*khašm girift*). But as the texts do not correspond in other respects, the rather general expression, might be a mere coincidence. Al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* put aside, the overall picture remains dispersed and disconnected. It seems that all six versions have produced their own version in this detail which is unmatched lexically with others, although the idea is more or less the same.

3.2.7. Exchanging insulting gifts and Hurmuzd IV's letter to Bahrām Čübīn

The motif of exchanging insulting gifts appears in al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 190), al-Dīnawarī (DN: 85), Bal'amī (BL II: 774–5, 1013), Firdawsī (FD VII: 576–7, 580–2, 592), al-Ṭa'ālībī (TB: 657, 659), *Nihāyat* (NH: 359, 361) and Gardīzī (GD: 99). There are three related scenes to this topic. First, after the denunciation by the vizier, Hurmuzd IV sends insulting gifts and a letter to Bahrām. Then Bahrām and his army reply by sending knives or daggers to Hurmuzd IV who responds by breaking them and sending them back to Bahrām Čübīn. In the chart below, we can see the translation of the letter and the items Hurmuzd IV sends to Bahrām Čübīn:

Chart 20.

	Insulting items sent by Hurmuzd IV	Description of Hurmuzd IV's letter
DN	A shackle (<i>jāmi'a</i>), women's clothes (<i>minṭaq imra'a</i>), a spindle (<i>mighzal</i>) (DN: 85).	"I am certain (<i>ṣaḥḥa 'indī</i>) that you [Bahrām] sent only a small fraction of the totality of the spoils. But it is my fault because I raised you (<i>wa-l-dhanb lī fī tašrīfī iyyā-ka</i>). I sent you a shackle. Now, put it to your neck, dress up with the clothes and take the spindle in your hands. For infidelity and treachery are the manners of womanhood (<i>fa-inna al-ghadr wa-l-kufrān min akhlāq al-nisā'</i>).” (DN: 85)
YQ	-	Hurmuzd IV writes to Bahrām and orders him to deliver the wealth in his possession (<i>mā fī yadī-hi min al-amwāl</i>) (YQ: 189).
BL	A fetter (<i>ghull</i>), spindle case (<i>dūkdān</i>), spindle (<i>dūk</i>) and a piece of cotton (<i>panba</i>) (BL II: 774).	"You [Bahrām] betrayed me and took more from the spoils than you sent to me. You showed ingratitude to my graciousness (<i>ni'mat-i marā nāsipāsī kardī</i>). Now, put the fetter to your neck for the punishment of the treachery (<i>khiyānat</i>) and place the spindle case in front of you and spin the spindle. For the ungratefulness belongs to the talents of womanhood (<i>ni'mat az kār-i zanān</i>) and in this respect, you are worse than a woman (<i>tū az zan battarī</i>).” (BL II: 774)
FD	A spindle case (<i>dūkdān</i>), spindle (<i>dūk</i>) and cotton (<i>panba</i>), blue skirt (<i>pīrāhan-i lāžūrad</i>), red breeches (<i>surkh šalvār</i>) and yellow women clothes (<i>miqnā'-i zard</i>) (FD VII: 580).	Then the king writes a letter / to Bahrām: “You rude devil; you don't know yourself any longer / it seems you do not need superiors anymore; You do not understand anymore that the virtues (<i>hunar-hā</i>) come from God / and now you are sitting on the throne (<i>čarkh-i falak</i>); You no longer remember the troubles I endured / neither my army, wealth and efforts; You don't act like the warriors act / since your head remains high in the skies; You deviated from my orders / and followed your plans; Now you'll receive a royal robe that fits to you / it is suitable and chosen according to your achievements.” (FD VII: 580) He chose a dishonourable (<i>bī-maniš</i>) messenger / to be suitable to deliver this indecent (<i>nā-sazā</i>) robe of honour; He [Hurmuzd IV] said to bring this to Bahrām / and say to him “You ignorant (<i>sabuk-māya</i>) and unskilful (<i>bī-hunar</i>) man; You chained and confined Khāqān III / and approved injuring your superiors; I will bring you down from your throne (<i>takhtī</i>) / and will have no consideration for you whatsoever.” (FD VII: 581)
IB	A spindle (<i>al-mighzal</i>), a piece of cotton (<i>quṭun</i>) and women's clothes (<i>tiyāb al-nisā'</i>) (IB: 657).	Hurmuzd IV orders writing a letter to Bahrām which contains reproaches (<i>al-tawbīkh</i>) and insults (<i>wa-l-tahjīn</i>) and asks him to send back the earrings and the boots (IB: 657).

NH	A shackle (<i>jāmi'a</i>), women's belt (<i>minṭaqat imra'a</i>) and spindle (<i>mighzal</i>) (NH: 359).	"I am certain (<i>qad taḥaqqāqa 'indī</i>) that you [Bahrām] did not send [all] the spoils, but only that which was left over from you and your companions. It is my fault (<i>kānat al-isā'at minnī</i>) to elevate someone like you after your indolent actions (<i>khumūl-ik</i>) and my praise of your name and after your lowliness (<i>waḍ'at-ik</i>). I sent you a shackle. Now, put it to your neck, wear the girdle and spin the spindle. The treachery (<i>al-ghadr</i>) and grace's infidelity (<i>kufrān al-ni'am</i>) are the instruments of women (<i>min ālāt al-nisā'</i>)." (NH: 359)
GD	A spindle (<i>dūk</i>), cotton (<i>panba</i>) (GD: 99).	"You [Bahrām] betrayed me and took some of the riches (<i>māl bāz giriftī</i>). Whoever betrays is a rebel and whoever rebels against us (<i>harki andar mā 'āṣī bāšadh</i>) is worse than a woman (GD: 99)."

Al-Ya'qūbī's text differs compared to other versions. First, he does not mention the insulting items, and second, he summarizes the letter with one phrase which does not correspond to the other texts. Al-Ya'qūbī's text stands apart by meaning, length, and lexicon. It seems that either al-Ya'qūbī stems from a different source or his text is considerably shortened.

In other versions, Hurmuzd IV sends Bahrām items like a spindle, cotton, and clothes which are associated with womanhood. In the letter, al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, *Nihāyat*, and Gardīzī describe Bahrām's actions as treacherous which, according to Hurmuzd IV, are an indication of feminine behaviour. These notions are meant to insult Bahrām Čūbīn harshly. The shackle, which cannot be interpreted positively either, symbolizes submission and humiliation.

On this occasion, all the versions, except Firdawsī, express Hurmuzd IV's wish that Bahrām return the spoils. As a general note, it seems that Firdawsī takes considerable liberty in writing this detail and probably reworked his sources, so different is the content compared to other versions. Another important point to emphasize is the religious tenor which is present elsewhere in Firdawsī's text too (see 3.5.2). Bahrām has deviated from the righteous path of God and is immersed in reckless and immoral pride.

In addition to the apparent connection between al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*, Bal'amī seems to have a link with the two. All three mention that Hurmuzd IV gave orders to Bahrām to put the shackle on his neck, spin the spindle and dress in the women's clothes. As this detail is absent from the other versions, it connects the three, which should be kept in mind for further analysis.

Bahrām responds by sending a basket full of knives to Hurmuzd IV who smashes them and sends them back to Bahrām. The content is more or less the same but differs in details:

Chart 21.

	Items sent by Bahrām Čübīn to Hurmuzd IV	Hurmuzd IV's reaction	Bahrām Čübīn's letter to Hurmuzd IV
YQ	Bahrām sends a basket full of knives with bent tips (<i>bi-safaṭ fī-hi sakākīn mu'awwajat al-ru'ūs</i>) (YQ: 190).	Hurmuzd IV breaks the tips of the knives (<i>fa-qata'a aṭrāf al-sakākīn</i>) and sends them back (YQ: 190).	-
BL	Bahrām sends 12,000 knives with bent tips (<i>hama sar-hā-yi ān kārd kaž</i>) to Hurmuzd IV as a sign of twelve thousand disapproving men (<i>hama az ū bi-gāšṭand wa ti-rā mukhālif šudand</i>) (BL II: 775).	Hurmuzd IV orders the knives to be smashed (<i>ān kārd-hā hama bi-šikast</i>) and sends them back (BL II: 775).	-
FD	Bahrām sends a basket full of knives (<i>salla pur khanjarī dāšṭa</i>) with twisted tips (<i>sar-i tigh bar-gāšṭa</i>) (FD VII: 592).	Hurmuzd IV orders the knives to be destroyed (<i>bi-farmūd tā tigh-hā bi-šikanand</i>) and sends them back (FD VII: 592).	-
ṬB	-	-	"You are not suitable to power and [the power] does not belong exclusively to you (<i>lā tastaqillu bi-hi</i>). So retire [from power] (<i>fa-'tazil</i>) and hand the command over to Khusraw II like the other kings have handed over [the command] to their descendants during their lifetime. Be on your guard before all the hands unite to kill you." (ṬB: 659)
NH	Bahrām makes 12,000 knives with bent tips (<i>sakīnan mu'awwajāt al-ru'ūs</i>) and sends them to Hurmuzd IV to let him know that he and his men have twisted themselves against him (<i>qad 'awwajū anfusa-hum 'alay-hi</i>) (NH: 361).	Hurmuzd IV orders the knives to be destroyed (<i>fa-kussirat ru'ūsuhā</i>) and sends them back to Bahrām (NH: 361).	-

Al-Ṭa'ālibī is distinct from the other versions as he does not mention the items sent by Bahrām to Hurmuzd IV or Hurmuzd IV's reactions to them. Instead, Bahrām composes a letter in a menacing tone in which he virulently criticizes Hurmuzd IV and wishes him to abdicate. Interestingly the letter is absent in other versions, but Bahrām's idea of Khusraw II being a better king than Hurmuzd IV is expressed in other texts (see 3.5.1).

The general content in al-Ya'qūbī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* is nearly the same. However, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* seem semantically on a par with one another. They both refer to 12,000 knives and explain why Bahrām sends the knives with bent tips. As this information is absent in the other versions, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* are linked.

Another curious remark is that al-Ya'qūbī mentions Bahrām Čübīn sending the knives to Hurmuzd IV but not the sending the insulting items by Hurmuzd IV, which gives the impression that Bahrām was the sole person to act blasphemously whereas in other versions Hurmuzd IV initiates the insults. If this is done consciously by al-Ya'qūbī, it might indicate a bias towards Bahrām Čübīn. One should recall as well that, unlike other versions, al-Ya'qūbī explicitly says that Bahrām was not of noble descent (*laysa bi-l-nabīh*) (see 3.6), another occasion where al-Ya'qūbī wants to depict Bahrām in a negative light, which should be noted for further analysis.

3.2.8. Bahrām's reluctance to revolt and the army's reactions

After the letter from Hurmuzd IV and exchange of insulting gifts, Bahrām's army reacts and revolts. The beginning of the revolt is described differently in different accounts, and this description reflects the writer's attitudes towards Bahrām Čübīn. As a narrative motif, the revolt has particular importance because it is a turning point which results in the deterioration of Bahrām's and Hurmuzd IV's relations and, finally, to Hurmuzd IV's demise. The crucial question is, who initiated the revolt? Was it Bahrām Čübīn or his men?

In the accounts of al-Dīnawarī (DN: 85), Bal'amī (BL II: 775), Firdawsī (FD VII: 583), al-Ṭa'ālībī (ṬB: 658), *Nihāyat* (NH: 360) and Gardīzī (GD: 99), Bahrām's army, not Bahrām, takes the initiative to revolt. Bahrām Čübīn, unlike his soldiers, acts calmly and tries to soothe his troops. In some accounts, the men speak and refer to a historical account to back their argument. They declare that Hurmuzd IV is an ungrateful king and deserves no respect:

Chart 22.

	Bahrām's soldiers' argument
DN	"We say like our first dissidents (<i>awwalū khawārij-nā</i>): neither Ardašīr the king nor vizier Yazdān, but we add neither Hurmuzd the king nor Yazdān-Jušnas the vizier." (DN: 85)
BL	"We are disgusted with both Hurmuzd IV and his vizier." (BL II: 775)
FD	"An old man does not want to stay loyal to the king Ardašīr because he pays no attention to his deeds whether they are good or bad (<i>čū nik ū bad-i man nadārad nigāh</i>)."
ṬB	(FD VII: 583) "Has Hurmuzd IV ever trusted someone so that he could trust you? Moreover, has any military commander ever been safe with him so that you could be safe? This treatment from his side is only a prelude of accusations and gradual procedure resulting in your extermination and satisfying his thirst for revenge (<i>al-tašaffā</i>). Indeed, if you do not serve him breakfast (<i>la-in lam tataghadda bi-hi</i>), he will eat you for dinner and throw a thunderbolt on you like he has done for a long time with the people similar to you and with his Empire's generals." (ṬB: 658)

NH	"We say like our first dissidents: Not Ardašīr the king nor Abrasām the vizier (NH: 360)"
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In the comments of Bahrām's army, we can identify four individuals: Ardašīr and his vizier, Hurmuzd IV and his vizier. As in the analysis of the insulting gifts (chart 20, pp. 122–3), al-Ṭa'ālibī's text stands out and the content of his text is remarkably different. For example, al-Ṭa'ālibī does not mention any of the four individuals mentioned by al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat*. In addition, his text has unique content, structure, and length.

Al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat* are connected by the form and structure and the fact that they mention one or more of the four individuals. However, Firdawsī's content is distinct from the others since he rephrases the idea. Firdawsī expresses the idea indirectly, whereas al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, and *Nihāyat* employ direct expressions such as "we say ..." and "we are disgusted ...". Therefore, they share the same underlying structure. Al-Dīnawarī is the only writer who explains the context of the argument and identifies the persons:

Some Christians (*ba'd al-ḥawāriyyīn*) were coming to the king Ardašīr Bābkān. They showed interest in him, and he converted to Christianity, God bless him. In that time, Ardašīr had a vizier called Yazdān, and he helped Ardašīr [in his conversion]. The Persians, subjects of the king, became furious and started to oust Ardašīr (*wa-hammū bi-khal'*) until he finally made an open revocation of his conversion. Then they accorded him [again] the royal power (*fa-aqarrūhu 'alā al-mulk*) (DN: 85–86).

The role of Bahrām's army is crucial because it shifts the responsibility, at least partially, from Bahrām to his army which can be interpreted as Bahrām's reluctance to revolt. For example, according to al-Dīnawarī's text, Bahrām Čūbīn's men conclude that either Bahrām would agree with dethroning Hurmuzd IV, or they would discharge him and lead the expedition themselves (*wa-illā khala'anā-ka wa-ra''asnā ghayru-ka*). Being caught between a rock and a hard place, Bahrām agrees with regret and sorrow (*wa-ajāba-hum 'alā asaf wa-hamm wa-karāhiyya*) (DN: 86). *Nihāyat*'s account naturally resembles that of al-Dīnawarī, except that Bahrām's sorrow (*ighitimām šadīd*), regret (*asaf 'aẓīm*) and sadness (*ka'ābat šadīd*) are emphasized even more (NH: 360).

According to Bal'amī, the soldiers are offended after seeing the insulting gifts of Hurmuzd IV and declare that if the king does not recognize Bahrām's efforts, consequently, he neglects their contribution as well. Bahrām takes the role of a conciliator and concludes that it is not Hurmuzd IV (*ū rā andar īn gunāh nīst*) but his elder vizier, Yazdān-Bakhšīš, who envies Bahrām and his men (*mā*

rā ḥasad karda ast) and should be blamed. The soldiers reply that if Bahrām is not willing to cooperate, they will be as disgusted with him as they are with the king. Bahrām agrees and they all revolt against Hurmuzd IV (*hama sipāh bi-jumla hurmuz rā mukhālif šudand*) (BL II: 775).

In Firdawsī's text, Bahrām's men unanimously condemn Hurmuzd IV's conduct and state that they will no longer be loyal to Hurmuzd IV, nor to Bahrām as Hurmuzd IV's general. Bahrām reminds them that the army's honour derives directly from the king and regardless of the situation they are still his suppliants and slaves. Bahrām tries to maintain their loyalty towards the king, but finally, he concedes and falls silent (*hamī dāšt bā pand lab rā bih band*) (FD VII: 583).

Gardīzī's version is even more radical: Bahrām and his generals (*pīšrawān-i laškar*) become furious after seeing the insulting gifts of Hurmuzd IV. They do not believe that Hurmuzd IV could be responsible for sending them because it cannot be the compensation (*mukāfāt*) for their accomplishments (GD: 99). The army rebels and turns its back on Hurmuzd IV. They convene with Hurmuzd IV's closest guards and declare: "We are not under the power of Bahrām" (*mā rā ṭāqat-i bahrām-i čūbīn nīst*). They dethrone Hurmuzd IV, blind him and put Khusraw II in his place. When Bahrām hears the news, he marches towards Ctesiphon to fight with Khusraw II (GD: 99). Gardīzī's approach is interesting since it implies that Bahrām was not directly involved in the dethroning of Hurmuzd IV. Rather, the text emphasizes the army's initiative and sole responsibility.

Unlike in the accounts of al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, *Nihāyat* and Gardīzī, in which Bahrām expresses reluctance to revolt, al-Ṭa'ālībī's text is straightforward. After his men's speech, Bahrām decides to revolt, dethrone Hurmuzd IV (*khalā'a-hu*) and to seek power for himself (*ṭalaba al-amr li-nafsi-hi*) (TB: 658). In other words, he takes the responsibility for the revolt himself without pressure from his men.

Bahrām Čūbīn's reluctance to revolt is an important detail because it brings to light Bahrām's attitudes towards the army and Hurmuzd IV as his superior. It appears that, until the beginning of the revolt, al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, *Nihāyat*, and Gardīzī regard Bahrām not as a malevolent agitator and usurper but rather as a responsible and loyal general and victim of intrigue.

3.2.9. Other motives for the revolt

In addition to the motives discussed above, there are other motives for the revolt too. For instance, al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī do not mention exchanging insulting gifts at all, which naturally cannot serve as a motive for the revolt. Al-Ya'qūbī describes the beginning of the revolt as follows:

Hurmuzd IV wrote to Bahrām and ordered him to deliver all the treasures in his possession and that was harsh toward Bahrām. Bahrām informed his men about this. Consequently, they discussed Hurmuzd IV in a most infamous manner (*fa-dhakarū hurmuz aqbaḥ dhikr*). Both Bahrām and his army renounced Hurmuzd IV's kingship (*khala'a-hu*) (YQ: 189–90).

According to al-Ya'qūbī, the only apparent reason for the revolt is Hurmuzd IV's harsh treatment of Bahrām, which differs considerably from the other versions where the revolt is described as a consequence of the insulting gifts and exchange of impolite messages. Al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Aṭīr (AṬ: 365) mention indirectly that Bahrām and Hurmuzd IV have had a dispute, but like al-Ya'qūbī, the passage is succinct and provides no reasons for the revolt:

Bahrām was afraid of Hurmuzd IV's violence (*saṭwat hurmuz*) as were the soldiers who were with him. Consequently, they renounced Hurmuzd IV's kingship (*fa-khala'ū hurmuz*) and advanced toward Ctesiphon. They expressed resentment at Hurmuzd IV's behaviour and proclaimed that Hurmuzd IV's son was more fitting for the royal power than he (*aṣṣaḥ li-l-mulk min-hi*). Some members of Hurmuzd IV's court circles helped them with the plan (ṬB I: 993).

Ibn al-Balkhī presents a description of the events that is similar to al-Ṭabarī's and Ibn al-Aṭīr's. According to him, after Bahrām had fought against Khāqān II and Khāqān III and sent immense riches and spoils to the king, Hurmuzd IV praised Bahrām and ordered him to proceed to Turan. Without further explanations, Bahrām did not consent (*ṣawāb namī dīd*). In reaction to this, Hurmuzd IV spoke fiercely (*sukhanān-i durušt*) against Bahrām. When Bahrām heard this, he understood Hurmuzd IV's violent character (*ṭab'-i hurmuz dar qattālī šinākht*) and was intimidated (*az-ū nafūr gašt*). Bahrām Čūbīn addressed his generals and said:

The king wants to annihilate everyone's lineage (*tukhm-i hamigān*), and we have to take our measures (*mā rā tadbīr-i khwīš bāyad kard*) (BKk: 99).

All of Bahrām's men agree that he would be the king (*kī ū pādīšāh bāšad*) until Hurmuzd IV's son Khusraw II arrives (BKk: 99). When Hurmuzd IV hears the news, he becomes distressed and runs out of means (*hič ḥīlat natawānist kardan*).

Ibn al-Balkhī approves of Bahrām's kingship until Khusraw II comes to power. Al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, and *Nihāyat* give another explanation and affirm that Bahrām would be the king until

Šahriyār, Hurmuzd IV's younger son ascends the throne. According to al-Dīnawarī, Bahrām Čübīn addresses his men and says:

You have found out that Khusraw II has committed a great sin by killing his father. He has fled [to Azerbaijan]. Do you approve that I assume the direction of the royal responsibilities (*tadbīr hādhā al-mulk*) until Šahriyār, son of Hurmuzd IV, attains the age of maturity? Then I will deliver [the kingship] to him. One group approved and another rejected [the proposition]. Among those who rejected it was Mūsīl al-Armanī. He said to Bahrām: “O general, you have no right to assume anything. Khusraw II is the possessor and heir of the kingship in its restoration.” Bahrām said: “Those who do not approve should leave Ctesiphon. If I encounter after three [days] someone living in Ctesiphon who does not approve, I shall kill him.” Mūsīl al-Armanī left with those who shared his view, and they amounted roughly to 20,000 men (DN: 94).

Bal'amī (BL II: 789–90) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 365, 370) give a similar account, and both mention Khusraw II's crime of killing his father, the three days waiting period and 20,000 men. The three texts seem to have the same source. Bal'amī is perhaps the most multifaceted source regarding the revolt of Bahrām Čübīn. For example, when Hurmuzd IV has been overthrown and blinded, Bahrām draws the conclusion that he is ready to make peace with Hurmuzd IV and return to obedience (BL II: 780, 783). Instead of Hurmuzd IV, he accuses Khusraw II and makes plans to remove him so that Hurmuzd IV could retake the throne. Bal'amī is the only text in which this motif appears. Bahrām summons his men and says to them:

“Even if Hurmuzd IV acted unjustly towards us, in the beginning he acted benevolently [since] he dispatched and equipped us with multiple types of equipment (*mā rā az dar-i khwīš bā čandān khwāsta gusīl kard*). This bad [behaviour] did not originate from Hurmuzd IV but his vizier Yazdān Bakhšīš. Finally, he sent the vizier to us to apologize. The fulfilment of [Hurmuzd IV's] right is incumbent on us (*ḥaqq-i way bar mā wājib ast*) so that we fight Khusraw II who is the tyrant (*sītamgār*). He [Khusraw II] made this all so that such a thing would occur for the king Hurmuzd IV. Let us make war with him [Khusraw II], take the kingship from him and return it to Hurmuzd IV.” (BL II: 783)

The text refers later to this attempt and affirms that Hurmuzd IV retook the crown with the help of Bahrām Čübīn (*hurmuz rā bih pādšāhī bi-nišānad*; BL II: 785). Bahrām's attitudes toward Hurmuzd IV vary considerably from one text to another.

3.2.10. Hurmuzd IV sends his vizier to Bahrām to apologize

Hurmuzd IV deals with the escalating situation in various ways. In the accounts of al-Ṭa'ālibī (ṬB: 659) and Ibn al-Balkhī (BKh: 99) he consults his vizier and regrets his actions. In the accounts of al-Dīnawarī (DN: 86–7), Bal'amī (BL II: 779–81), Firdawsī (FD VII: 617–23), al-Ṭa'ālibī (ṬB: 659), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 361–3), Hurmuzd IV regrets his actions and sends his vizier to Bahrām Čübīn to apologize. In al-Ṭa'ālibī's text, Hurmuzd IV does not send his vizier, but a man called Ādhīn-Kušasp. The name of the man resembles greatly the vizier's names in other versions and appears in the same narrative context (ṬB: 659) (see 3.2.5). According to al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, and Ibn al-Balkhī, Hurmuzd IV sends someone to fight Bahrām Čübīn, who in Ibn al-Balkhī's account is a powerful general (*iṣfahbad-i buzurg*; BKh: 99) and in al-Ya'qūbī's and al-Ṭabarī's account a man called Ādhīn-Jušnas (YQ: 190; ṬB I: 995). Al-Dīnawarī (DN: 86–7), Bal'amī (BL II: 779–81), Firdawsī (FD VII: 617–23), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 361–3) tell a story of the vizier's journey. It is a rather long story within the main story and according to Bal'amī it goes as follows:

Hurmuzd IV says: "I know that I made a mistake regarding Bahrām Čübīn (*khaṭā kardam andar kār-i bahrām*). His compensation (*pādāšan*) was not that which I did [to him]. I was listening to the talk of Yazdān-Bakhšīš who turned my mind against Bahrām on that day when the spoils were exposed. Now I think that I should send [Yazdān-Bakhšīš] to Bahrām Čübīn and I should explain that this happened because he [i.e., Yazdān] turned my mind against you and that I have sent this man to you so that you can either kill him or forgive him. Bahrām is a generous man. When he sees Yazdān-Bakhšīš, he will make excuses and pardon him. When my message reaches him, he will return to obedience."

The head of the Moubads said: "This is a good arrangement." Everyone accepted his idea. Then Hurmuzd IV sent someone to call Yazdān-Bakhšīš and to invite him to the court and to deliver him this speech. He said: "May the king live a long life! May my life be the king's ransom! I may go and make my excuses and if Bahrām is satisfied it is a good thing and if he punishes me and kills me, by the sacrifice of my life the realm will approve. May my soul and body be the king's ransom." Hurmuzd IV thanked and praised him and ordered him to get ready and go so that nothing other than the letter from the king would be with him.

Yazdān-Bakhšiš left and made preparations for the travel. He had a cousin who was detained in a prison of Hurmuzd IV for some time for a certain crime. When the man heard that Yazdān-Bakhšiš was travelling, he wrote a letter to him from the prison saying that they should go together and that “my heart may stay with you” and “there is no one who is closer to you than I or more just than I. Request my release from the king so that I could travel with you and that I could be with you in life and death.”

Yazdān-Bakhšiš wrote a letter to the king and requested the release. Hurmuzd IV set the man free. The man set out with Yazdān-Bakhšiš. When they reached the city of Hamadan they halted. The news reached Bahrām Čūbīn when he had set up the military camp at the gates of Ray. He was delighted and had the intention to accept [Yazdān-Bakhšiš’s] excuses, give him presents and make peace with Hurmuzd IV.

Yazdān Bakhšiš halted at a guest house and asked from the master of the house: “Is there in this town a female augur or a soothsayer?” [He said]: “Convoke her!” They said that there was a woman soothsayer and she was brought to the guest house. Yazdān-Bakhšiš sat privately with her. He asked her what will be the outcome of our efforts at the end of this travel and what business will the king, who is close to me, have with me. She replied: “You don’t have anything to fear with the king [since] you will bring forth your own perdition.” When she was telling the story, the cousin opened the door and came in. The woman spoke quietly so that the cousin would not hear: “Your death will result from the hands of that man.” [In the past] when the astrologers took Yazdān-Bakhšiš’s horoscope, they judged [similarly] that “your death will be the result of your own words that are addressed to the king’s court and that your death will occur at the hands of your cousin”.

When the woman uttered the words, he [suddenly] remembered the astrologers’ prediction. He said to the woman: “You are right!” The woman left and his cousin sat down. Yazdān-Bakhšiš said to him: “I have to speak with king Hurmuzd IV and no one except me and him should know about it. I must send him a letter. I have confidence only in you to deliver the letter. You came with me to help me. And because an [urgent] affair occurred, you have to deliver this message with your own hand and give it to the king and bring back the answer and give it to me so that Bahrām is unaware of it. If you return quickly and I am still alive, I will pay you justly.” The cousin said: “I am at your service.” The next day he made preparations for the travel.

Yazdān-Bakhšiš composed a letter to king Hurmuzd IV [and wrote]: “I send back the man whose release I requested from the king. The king must order immediately that the man be killed since

his killing is suitable (*kih way kuštan rā šāyad*).” He sealed the letter and gave it to the cousin. He took the letter and left. Then he thought to himself “Why should I return to the same king in whose prison I was locked for years? What sort of letter am I delivering to him? And what do I know about the state of affairs in the world anyhow?”

The man opens the letter and reads it. He becomes outraged, takes his sword out and returns to Yazdān-Bakhšiš. When Yazdān-Bakhšiš sees him returning, he says: “My cousin, don’t act quickly before I say something to you!” But he did not pay attention to Yazdān-Bakhšiš. He struck with his sword and killed him.⁵³ The cousin then travels to Bahrām Čübīn in Ray. He brings Yazdān-Bakhšiš’s head with him and throws it before Bahrām and says: “This is the head of Yazdān-Bakhšiš, the sinner who turned the heart of Hurmuzd IV against you. He came from Ctesiphon and wished to betray and kill you. I came along with him. I searched for an opportunity, saw a favourable situation and killed him out of loyalty to you (*az ta’ššub-i tirā*) so that I could bring his head before the king.”

Bahrām was struck with severe anxiety since the peace plans were shattered. He said: “O you sinner! Who are you to kill this vizier of great virtue? He came for peace and to apologize, serving the king!” Immediately, he ordered the man to be killed.

When the news about [the fate of] Yazdān-Bakhšiš reached Ctesiphon, all the viziers, secretaries, generals and Moubads became sad because he was the greatest, the most learned and noblest of all (BL II: 779–81).

After this episode, the court reproaches Hurmuzd IV’s conduct and questions the necessity and morality of sending Yazdān-Bakhšiš before Bahrām. They sit together and ask themselves how long they have to endure the calamities of this son-of-a-Turanian, referring to Hurmuzd IV. The situation leads to the ousting and killing of Hurmuzd IV.

Here it is important to note that Bal’amī’s account differs from the other texts in one important respect. It emphasizes Bahrām’s peaceful aspirations and willingness to make peace with Hurmuzd IV. The following two phrases are crucial: “He was delighted and intended to accept [Yazdān-Bakhšiš’s] excuses, give him presents and make peace with Hurmuzd IV” (BL II: 780). In this sentence Bahrām premeditatively embraces peace. The second phrase “Bahrām was struck with severe

⁵³ The parallel manuscripts do not mention Yazdān-Bakhšiš giving a letter to his cousin. The cousin kills him merely because he wants to act as if he was Bahrām himself (*khwāst kih bi-jā-yi bahrām kār kunad*) (BL II: 1014). In the account of al-Ya’qūbī, a certain Christian man (*rajuḷ ḥawārī*) kills Ādhīn-Jušnas who occupies the function of the vizier in the narrative (YQ: 190).

anxiety and his peace plans were shattered” (BL II: 781) emphasizes the idea that Bahrām had made a firm decision to make peace.

This theme is not expressed similarly in other accounts. For example, in al-Dīnawarī’s text, Bahrām blames the cousin for his action and calls him an evildoer (*fāsiq*) because he killed a noble man who came to seek forgiveness and peace. *Nihāyat*’s text (NH: 363), which is similar to al-Dīnawarī’s text in wording, and Firdawsī (FD VIII: 622) convey the same idea. However, all of them lack the emphasis on Bahrām’s role.

3.2.11. Blinding, dethroning and killing of Hurmuzd IV

Hurmuzd IV’s blinding, dethroning and killing is one of the major events of the stories. Regarding this detail, Czeglédý draws parallels with some Pahlavi texts in which the king, presumably Hurmuzd IV, is described as deaf and blind (1958: 36–7). All versions, except Gardīzī, mention Hurmuzd IV’s dethroning and blinding. Hurmuzd IV’s evil conduct, the dissatisfaction of the Iranian people and the court circles and their disapproval of Hurmuzd IV’s reign are often mentioned. Another common motif is the death of the vizier sent by Hurmuzd IV to apologize to Bahrām Čūbīn, which incited discontent and anger at the court and initiated Hurmuzd IV’s dethroning. Khusraw II’s two uncles Bindūy and Bišām are often involved in Hurmuzd IV’s dethroning and death. Al-Maḡdisī’s version differs significantly from the other texts:

Bahrām revolted against Hurmuzd IV (*khala’a yada-hu min ṭā’ati-hi*), overcame Khorasan and its governors. Then, Bahrām wrote to the leaders and satraps to incite them against Hurmuzd IV (*yughrī-him bi-hi*). They rushed on Hurmuzd IV, tore out his eyes (*samalū ‘aynay-hu*), put him in prison and made his son [Khusraw II] the king (MQ III: 169).

No other text says that Bahrām took an active position before the uprising and incited the leaders and satraps against Hurmuzd IV. In the other versions, the uprising emerges naturally from the growing tensions in the Sasanian state and court. However, later on in the story Bahrām uses Khusraw II’s involvement in Hurmuzd IV’s death as an excuse to revolt against Khusraw II (see 3.2.9, 3.5.1).

In the version of Bal’amī, Khusraw II’s two uncles, Bindūy and Bišām, return to Ctesiphon after Khusraw II is forced to flee and seek help from king Maurice of the Byzantines. Together they reason that when Bahrām Čūbīn reaches Ctesiphon he will either place Hurmuzd IV on the throne and send an army to catch Khusraw II and his retinue, or, if Hurmuzd IV is no longer in the royal castle, Bahrām

will send an army after them anyhow. Therefore, they must return to Ctesiphon and eliminate Hurmuzd IV. Without Khusraw II knowing their plans, Bindūy and Biṣṭām return to the Persian capital and kill Hurmuzd IV (BL II: 785).

3.3. Bahrām Čübīn fights Khusraw II

In section 3.3 we will analyse some narrative motifs of narrative block V (Bahrām Čübīn fights Khusraw II). At this point in the story, Bahrām and his troops have revolted, and Hurmuz IV is dethroned. After Hurmuz IV's death, Bahrām ascends the throne and chases Khusraw II out of Iran. As a consequence, Khusraw II seeks help from king Maurice of Byzantium, who grants him troops and generals. Bahrām and Khusraw II fight two times: the first time Bahrām wins and the second time Khusraw II defeats Bahrām with Byzantine forces.

In some of the motifs, there is considerable variation. For instance, before Khusraw II asks for help from Maurice, according to al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 191), al-Mas'ūdī (MS I: 316), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 372), he arrives at the city of Edessa (*al-Ruhā*). In al-Dīnawarī's text, the city is called al-Yarmūk (DN: 95) and in al-Ṭabarī's and Ibn al-Balkhī's versions Anṭākiya (ṬB I: 999; BKh: 102). The narrative motif of Arabs who help Khusraw II is another detail which has considerable inner variation.

3.3.1. The Arabs help Khusraw II on his way to Byzantium

The first variation concerns the chronological place of the episode in the story. In al-Dīnawarī (DN: 95), Bal'amī (BL II: 791–2), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 75–9) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 371–2) this episode appears after Bahrām Siyāwuš chases Khusraw II into a monastery (V/j). In al-Ṭabarī (ṬB I: 998–9), the sequence is reversed, and the monastery episode occurs afterwards.

In this episode, Khusraw II travels outside Iran's borders and is at the mercy of strangers. Khusraw II and his travel companions go astray and suffer from hunger and the harsh climate of the desert. They meet individuals who guide them through the desert and supply them with food and provisions.⁵⁴ The names of the individuals, places, traveling time and the number of persons traveling with Khusraw II vary. These differences can be seen in the chart below:

Chart 23.

	Name of the first individual	Name of the second individual	Rivers, cities, and places	Travel time or distance	Number of individuals traveling with Khusraw II
DN	<i>Iyyās b. Qabīša</i> , from the tribe of <i>Ṭayy</i> (DN: 95)	<i>Khālīd b. Jabalāt al-Ghassānī</i> (DN: 95)	<i>al-Furāt</i> , <i>al-Yarmūk</i> (DN: 95)	-	-
ṬB	<i>Khuršīdhān</i> (ṬB I: 998)	-	<i>al-Furāt</i> (ṬB I: 998)	-	-

⁵⁴ Al-Ya'qūbī provides a considerably different plot: after an episode which resembles the monastery episode, Khusraw II travels to Azerbaijan and arrives in Edessa (*al-Ruhā*). There Khusraw II is detained by the ruler of the city (*ṣāhib al-Ruhā*). Khusraw II writes to Maurice and asks for help and advice (YQ: 191). In the text of al-Ya'qūbī, neither the Arabs nor anyone else is mentioned helping Khusraw II before reaching Byzantine territory.

BL	<i>Iyyās b. Qabīša</i> , from the tribe of <i>Ṭayy</i> and the clan of <i>Ḥanẓala</i> (BL II: 791)	-	<i>Furāt</i> (BL II: 791)	three days and nights (<i>sih</i> <i>šabānrūz</i>) (BL II: 791)	ten (BL II: 791)
FD	<i>Qays b. Ḥārīt</i> from Egypt (<i>miṣr</i>) (FD VIII: 76)	<i>Mihrān-Sitād</i> , a merchant (FD VIII: 78)	<i>Furāt</i> (FD VIII: 75)	70 parsangs (FD VIII: 77)	-
NH	<i>Iyyās b. Qabīša</i> , from the tribe of <i>Ṭayy</i> and the clan of <i>Ḥanẓala</i> (NH: 371)	-	<i>al-Furāt</i> (NH: 371)	three days and nights (<i>ṭalāṭat</i> <i>ayyām wa-</i> <i>layāli-hinna</i>) (NH: 371)	ten (NH: 371)

In addition to the above-mentioned details, in al-Dīnawarī's (DN: 95), Bal'amī's (BL II: 791), and *Nihāyat*'s (NH: 371) versions, Khusraw II knows Arabic, and according to Bal'amī (BL II: 791), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 75), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 371), Khusraw II tries to hunt without success before meeting the generous Arabs.

In this episode, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* have a strong connection. The beginning of the chapters where the episode appears in *Nihāyat* (*Tafsīr mā kāna min amr Kisrā Abarwīz ba'd mufāriqat Bindūy* [...]; NH: 371–3) and Bal'amī (*Qiṣṣa-yi Parwīz bā qaṣṣar-i rūm wa-bāz-gaṣṭan bā sipāh bih Madāyin*; BL II: 791–800) are very similar with regard to the structure and nomenclature. In the chart above we can see that the name *Iyyās b. Qabīša*, travelling time, and the number of individuals travelling with Khusraw II are the same. In addition, there are other identical passages, such as Khusraw II smiling and *Iyyās b. Qabīša* ordering the slaughter of three sheep, which attest to the same source.⁵⁵

Despite these similarities, the versions present a fair amount of unique details. For instance, only al-Dīnawarī and Firdawsī present two individuals but the names in each of the texts are completely different. Al-Dīnawarī is the only version to mention al-Yarmūk and in al-Ṭabarī's version the name *Khuršīdhān* seem to be Persian rather than Arabic.

In addition to al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat*, Arabs who help Khusraw II by providing horses for his use are mentioned in the versions of al-Mas'ūdī and al-Maqqdisī. The context differs from the examples above since the Arabs appear at the first encounter of Bahrām

⁵⁵ Khusraw II smiling is expressed in Bal'amī's text by the phrase "*parwīz tabassam kard*" (BL II: 792) and in *Nihāyat*'s text by "*fa-tabassama kisrā*" (NH: 371); *Iyyās b. Qabīša* ordering the slaughter of sheep is expressed in Bal'amī's text by the phrase "*ayyās bi-farmūd tā sih gūspand bi-kuṣṭand*" (BL II: 792) and in *Nihāyat*'s text by the phrase "*ṭumma amara bi-ṭalāṭ kibāš fa-dhubiḥat*" (NH: 372) which could be direct translations of one another.

and Khusraw II at the Nahrawān River. However, the similarity of the names with those provided by Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* demand a closer look.

According to al-Mas'ūdī, Khusraw II's horse, Šabdāz, exhausts itself and fails to carry him. Consequently, Khusraw II asks a man called al-Nu'mān to lend him his horse, al-Yaḥmūm, but he refuses. Then Ḥassān b. Ḥaṇẓala b. Ḥayya al-Ṭā'ī, whose men had betrayed him and who was on the verge of perdition, looks at Khusraw II and gives him his horse called al-Ḍubayb and says: "O king, save yourself with my horse for your life has more importance for the people (*khayr li-l-nās*) than mine." In exchange, Khusraw II gives his horse to Ḥassān. Later, Hurmuzd IV recognizes Ḥassān's efforts and sacrifices for Khusraw II (MS I: 314–5). Al-Maqdisī mentions the same details except that in his text the first Arab is called al-Nu'mān b. al-Mundhir and the second Ḥassān b. Ḥaṇẓala al-Ṭā'ī. Al-Maqdisī also adds that Khusraw II rides al-Ḍubayb to king Maurice of Byzantium (MQ: 169–70). Regardless of the small discrepancies, the link between al-Mas'ūdī and al-Maqdisī is evident.

3.3.2. Khusraw II shoots an arrow and hits Bahrām Čübīn's horse

This narrative motif (V/g) appears in the texts of al-Dīnawarī (DN: 90), Bal'amī (BL II: 784–5), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 44–6), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 366) after the first encounter and fight between Bahrām and Khusraw II. The content is more or less similar in the texts: Khusraw II, who has only ten soldiers left, discusses the situation with his men and decides to retreat to Ctesiphon because he lacks sufficient troops. However, the four texts disagree on the description of Khusraw II's companions.⁵⁶ In the chart below, the companions are shown:

Chart 24.

	Companions of Khusraw II in different texts
DN	Bindūy, Biṣṭām, Hurmuzd-Jarābzīn, al-Nukhārjān, Sābūr b. Abarkān, Yazdak (the scribe of the army), Bād b. Fayrūz, Šarwīn b. Kāmjar and brother of Bahrām Čübīn, Kurdī b. Bahrām Jušnas (DN: 90)
BL	Bindūy, Biṣṭām, Hurmuzd Khurrād-Burzīn and the chief scribe (<i>buzurg dabīr</i>) (BL II: 784)
FD	Bindūy, Biṣṭām, and a Persian nobleman, Zangūy (FD VIII: 44)
NH	Bindūy (NH: 366)

⁵⁶ Al-Ṭabarī's text describes the companions of Khusraw II not on this occasion but before the second fight between Bahrām and Khusraw II. Al-Ṭabarī mentions six men including a brother of Bahrām called Kurdī, Bindūy, Biṣṭām, Sābūr b. Afaryān b. Farrukhzād, Farrukh-Hurmuz and Abādar (TB I: 1000) who all, according to Bosworth (Al-Ṭabarī, 1999: 313, n. 735), are given in one version of Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma* which forms a connection between al-Ṭabarī and Firdawsī. In Khāleghi-Motlagh's edition, the number fourteen is mentioned but Firdawsī identifies only eight of Khusraw II's companion: Gurdūy (= Kurdī), Bindūy, Šāpūr, Andiyān, Farrukhzād, Ādhar-Gušasp, Zangūy and Aštād (FD VIII: 159–60).

Curiously, all four texts mention that Khusraw II is in company with ten men, but none of them identify all of them. Al-Dīnawarī identifies nine of the ten whereas Bal'amī gives four names, Firdawsī three and *Nihāyat* only one. The names Bindūy, Biṣṭām and the scribe are found in two or more of the four texts, and the rest of the names appear only once. It is remarkable that the number of names tends to diminish rather than increase over time. One would expect the names mentioned by al-Dīnawarī, which is the oldest text, to appear more often in the more recent versions. Instead, the texts indicate the opposite.

After the decision to retreat, Khusraw II unexpectedly sees Bahrām and shoots an arrow at his horse. Regarding this detail too, the description differs. In the text of Bal'amī, Khusraw II sees Bahrām riding in the plain from afar, whereas in the accounts of al-Dīnawarī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat* the two meet at a bridge. Firdawsī describes the bridge as a bridge over the Nahrawān River (*pul-i nahrawān*) (FD VIII: 45) whereas al-Dīnawarī and the writer of *Nihāyat* employ two different names. According to al-Dīnawarī, the bridge is called Jūdharz (*qaṇṭarat jūdharz*) (DN: 90) and according to *Nihāyat* Kārsūn (*qaṇṭarat kārsūn*) (NH: 366). The two names for the bridge indicate that al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* not only have different plot lines but the content within the same narrative motifs differs.

The shooting of the arrow is described in detail in all three texts. According to Bal'amī, Bahrām is in full armour, but his horse has no shield on the barrel. Therefore, Khusraw II aims at the barrel and hits the target. According to Firdawsī, Bahrām has only a bow in his hand, and the horse is not armoured, and the arrow hits the side of the horse (*bar bar-i bārigī*) (FD VIII: 46). According to al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*, the arrow hits the face of the horse. In all three accounts the horse flings Bahrām to the ground, and Bahrām has to continue by walking. In Bal'amī's text only, Bahrām shouts to Khusraw II: "I will show you, bastard!" (BL II: 785).

Khusraw II shooting an arrow at the horse of Bahrām is an important detail for two reasons. First, it expresses Khusraw II's last act of defiance and a small reprisal after the defeat. In the larger picture, it could be interpreted as a sign of Khusraw II's superiority and higher royal status. In the end, he will prevail over the usurper, and the legitimacy of his royal power will be approved. Second, Khusraw II's capacity to humiliate Bahrām and make him walk is telling of the writers' attitudes toward Bahrām Čūbīn. The depiction of Bahrām's humiliation expresses a non-approval of his military campaigns and endeavours to take power. The shooting is both a narrative premonitory effect and a warning sign of Bahrām's final defeat.

3.3.3. Bahrām Čübīn rides a piebald (*ablaq*) horse

In considering all the texts, similarities in wording (verbatim or quasi-identical phrases or expressions) rarely occur. The connections are often shown on a thematic level: the same theme or narrative motif is expressed differently in different versions. Previously I have identified obvious similarities in section 1.5 (i.e., Ibn Qutayba and al-Maqdisī; al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*; al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Aṭīr), some others have surfaced in this study, for instance, in section 3.1.1 (i.e., al-Ya‘qūbī and al-Ṭabarī; al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī) and 3.2.6 (i.e., al-Mas‘ūdī and al-Ṭa‘ālibī).

Bahrām Čübīn riding a piebald (*ablaq*) horse is an exception. It is a transversal motif appearing in seven different texts both in Arabic and Persian. If we do not take into account some common personal names or perhaps the motif of external forces threatening Hurmuzd IV’s kingdom (3.1.1), no other detail or word runs through as many versions as this one, even though the narrative motif appears in two different contexts. In the accounts of al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, Bal‘amī and *Nihāyat* it appears during the second and decisive fight between Bahrām Čübīn and Khusraw II (V/w). Khusraw II sends a man ‘worth a thousand men’ to fight Bahrām (V/s)⁵⁷ and to identify Bahrām, who rides a piebald horse, Khusraw II speaks to the fighter and indicates where the target is.

According to the accounts of al-Ṭabarī and Firdawsī, the context is different. The brother of Bahrām Čübīn (Kurdī or Gurdūy) identifies Bahrām and indicates his location to Khusraw II who, instead of fighting, wants to start discussions and negotiations with Bahrām. In al-Ṭabarī and Firdawsī, the episode occurs earlier, before the first fight between Bahrām and Khusraw II (V/f). The context in the account of al-Ṭa‘ālibī is similar, but the brother of Bahrām is completely absent. The expressions of the piebald horse and Bahrām riding it are the following:

Chart 25.

	Expressions of the piebald horse
DN	“owner of the piebald horse” (<i>ṣāhib al-furs al-ablaq</i>) (DN: 97)
YQ	“owner of the piebald” (<i>ṣāhib al-ablaq</i>) (YQ: 192)
ṬB	“owner of the piebald nag” (<i>ṣāhib al-birdhawn al-ablaq</i>) (ṬB I: 997)
BL	“He has a piebald horse” (<i>asb ablaq dārad</i>) (BL II: 796)
FD	“Look at that champion of the piebald horse” (<i>nigah kun bidān gurd-i ablaq-sawār</i>) (FD VIII: 14)
ṬB	“owner of the piebald” (<i>ṣāhib al-ablaq</i>) (ṬB: 663)
NH	“owner of the piebald horse” (<i>ṣāhib al-furs al-ablaq</i>) (NH: 377)

⁵⁷ The ‘men worth a thousand men’ is a literary topos and in this study also a narrative motif that appear in eight versions of the story (YQ: 192, DN: 96, ṬB I: 999, BL II: 795, FD VIII: 120, NH: 375, BKh: 102, AṬ: 367). Noth discusses the thousand-man topos and concludes it doubtless entered Islamic tradition from Persia (1994: 169).

In contrast with the variability of the content that the reader often witnesses in the corpus, whether regarding a single passage or a word, the invariability of the word *ablaq* stands out. The detail seems to be rather insignificant and it could have been subjected to many changes: the adjective could have been modified to another or the whole scene could have been radically modified or omitted entirely. In the corpus, examples of this kind are manifold. Despite the two different contexts, the stability of the word *ablaq* suggests the texts are ultimately based on the same source.

3.4. Death of Bahrām Čübīn

In section 3.4, we will analyse four narrative motifs related to Bahrām Čübīn's death. The summary of the events is as follows. Before his assassination and final moments, Bahrām Čübīn retreats to the land of Turan and allies himself with Khāqān IV, who, in al-Ṭa'ālibī's account is identified as Khāqān III's son (ṬB: 658, 674). With the permission of Khāqān IV, Bahrām kills Khāqān IV's brother, a feat for which Bahrām is respected and praised. Bahrām accomplishes another feat when he saves the life of Khātūn II's daughter, kidnapped by a beast. Khusraw II hears about the high status gained by Bahrām in the land of Turan and sends a man to intrigue against him resulting in Bahrām's assassination and death. Bahrām's sister, Gurdiya, carries on, takes control of Bahrām's former troops and marches back to Iran. Another brother of Khāqān IV proposes to Gurdiya but she refuses and kills the man. According to many accounts, Gurdiya finally returns to the Sasanian court in Ctesiphon and Khusraw II marries her.

3.4.1. Bahrām fights and kills Khāqān IV's brother

This episode is found in al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 193), al-Dīnawarī (DN: 102), Bal'amī (BL II: 804, 1015), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 170–6) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 383–5). The episode goes as follows: After Bahrām Čübīn's defeat by Khusraw II, he arrives in the land of the Turanians. The king of Turan, Khāqān IV, receives him and treats him with respect. There is an argument between the king and his brother who acts disrespectfully towards the king. Bahrām notices the brother's behaviour and offers his help to Khāqān IV. Khāqān IV agrees, and Bahrām Čübīn has a duel with the brother. Bahrām kills the man, and the feat gains esteem and respect among the Turanians. Firdawsī's account, unlike other texts, describes the person as Khāqān IV's friend, not his brother (FD VIII: 170). Curiously the character has different names in different versions:

Chart 26.

	Khāqān IV's brother	The names written without diacritic marks ⁵⁸
DN	<i>Baghāwīr</i> (DN: 100–2)	نعاویر \ نعاویر
YQ	<i>.fāris</i> (YQ: 193)	نعارس
BL	<i>Yabghū</i> (BL II: 804, 1015)	ننغو \ نغو
FD	<i>Maghātūra</i> (FD VIII: 170, 172–5, 177)	معاورہ \ معاویرہ
NH	<i>Baghrūn</i> (NH: 383–5)	نغرون \ نغرون

If one compares the names written without diacritics, two groups emerge. The first group is characterized by the letter alif in the middle of the name which is found in the texts of al-Dīnawarī,

⁵⁸ Because the letters 'ayn and fā' resemble each other in medial position and are easily confused in handwriting, I decided to give two alternative versions for the name. The original form in the printed edition is on the right and the form in which the 'ayn is replaced by fā' or vice versa is on the left.

al-Ya'qūbī and Firdawsī. With some minor changes, the names could be identical and share the same textual origin. The second group includes the texts of Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* in which the name lacks the alif. Regarding this detail, the two groups presumably refer to two textual traditions. It is possible that the writers (or modern editors) did not pay attention to the orthography of foreign, i.e., non-Arabic and non-Persian names. This negligence might explain the variation in the orthography: the letters were confused with one another and the diacritic marks were written carelessly.

3.4.2. Bahrām fights a monster and rescues Khātūn II's daughter

This episode is mentioned by al-Mas'ūdī (MS I: 318), Bal'amī (BL: 804, 1015), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 176–84) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 385–6). The contents of the anecdote are more or less the same in the four versions, although Firdawsī's version is by far the longest. The episode goes as follows.

A monster had kidnapped the daughter of Khātūn II when she was walking in the fields and brought her up onto a mountain. According to Firdawsī, the monster throws stones at anyone who approaches it. Attempts to free her have previously been made to no avail, but Bahrām Čūbīn succeeds. He kills the beast and saves the life of the daughter. In addition to Bahrām's duel with Khāqān IV's brother, this is another feat that wins Bahrām an elevated position in the land of the Turanians. The names and descriptions of the beast deviate in the four texts:

Chart 27.

	Name of the monster	Description
MS	<i>al-sim'</i> (MS I: 318)	According to al-Mas'ūdī, like a huge goat (<i>naḥwa al-'unz al-kabīr</i>). Kazimirski characterizes the creature as an "animal né d'une louve et de l'hyène mâle" (De Biberstein-Kazimirski I, 1860: 1140)
BL	<i>khirs</i> (BL II: 804)	A bear.
FD	<i>širkappī</i> (FD VIII: 176–84)	A creature which is characterized as being bigger than a horse, having two big locks of hair like ropes, a yellow body and a black mouth and ears, and two lion-like claws (FD VIII: 176). Firdawsī also uses the name <i>aždahā</i> , 'dragon', for the beast (FD VIII: 177–9, 181).
NH	<i>qird</i> (NH: 385)	An ape.

The names for the beast are not proper nouns and, therefore, the orthography, unlike the description of the beast, is insignificant. The descriptions of the beast seem not to be on a par with one another and each of the names represents its own category. A huge goat, a bear, a lion-like

creature and an ape have nothing in common as such. Only the context in which they are presented links them together.

Regarding this detail, al-Mas'ūdī's text includes a description which is a key passage for the study at hand. He mentions the goat-like beast (*al-sim'*) after closing the account on Bahrām Čübīn. It is noteworthy that unlike Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat*, al-Mas'ūdī does not report the episode in its full length but only summarizes it:

The Persians have a separate book (*kitāb mufrad*) for the stories of Bahrām Jūbīn (*fī 'akhbār bahrām jūbīn*), which relates [the stories of] his ruses (*makāyidi-hi*) in the land of the Turanians. [For instance], Bahrām saving the king of Turan's daughter from the clutches of a monster called *al-Sim'*, who was like a huge goat. [The monster] carried her away from among her maidens and lifted her up (*'alā bi-hā*) [when] she had gone out in some pleasurable places. [The book also explains] the beginning [of Bahrām's story] until his death and his lineage (MS: 318).

Al-Mas'ūdī's description suggests that the "separate book" was, in fact, a secondary source in addition to the source(s) he had used for the story about Bahrām Čübīn in *Murūj al-Dhahab*. If not, why would he have mentioned the book in passing after the main account on Bahrām Čübīn has already been told and only summarized its contents? If the source for his account was this very book, he would have mentioned it clearly and embedded the information in the beginning or elsewhere in the main text. This is not the case since only Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* relate the contents at full length (see 4.4). The above description is clearly an insertion to serve as additional information on Bahrām Čübīn. Therefore, we can conclude that al-Mas'ūdī used at least two sources on Bahrām Čübīn.

Al-Mas'ūdī's use of multiple sources in the account of Bahrām Čübīn is not an exception. However, attesting evidence for multiple sources – even allusive as is the case here – is rare. Another example is Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma*: it seems certain that Firdawsī must have used multiple sources (see 4.8, 4.9). In addition to al-Dīnawarī's text, *Nihāyat* is connected to Bal'amī (4.5, 4.6, 4.7) which makes the number of his sources two or more.

A crucial question follows: Could al-Mas'ūdī's description be used as a criterion to assess the traces of the "separate book"? If yes, the texts in which this detail is found (i.e., Bal'amī, Firdawsī, *Nihāyat*) could be identified as containers of traces of the book. I will address this question below (see 4.4).

3.4.3. Khusraw II sends a man to intrigue against Bahrām

Khusraw II became aware of Bahrām's high position among the Turanians and feared that he might attack the Persian kingdom with the help of Khāqān IV. According to Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī, Bahrām persuades Khāqān IV to invade Iran. In al-Ṭa'ālibī's text, Khāqān IV approves this idea and grants troops and equipment to Bahrām. He orders Bahrām to pitch camp on the banks of the Oxus and wait there until he provides all the required matériel for the campaign (TB: 678). In Firdawsī's text, Bahrām hears that Khāqān IV has received a letter from Khusraw II. He requests Khāqān IV to equip an army to conquer Iran. Bahrām states that he will take by sword both Iran and Byzantium and uproot the Sasanians from power (*zi bun barkanam tukhm-i sāsāniyān*) (FD VIII: 188). Khāqān IV summons his advisors and wise men to a council. They advise that Khāqān IV should listen to Bahrām's idea and take action according to his plans. Yet they suggest that Khāqān IV should choose two young men to lead the army. Khāqān IV appoints two men, Zanwūy and Zangūy, whom he advises to be prudent in the battle and to keep an eye on Bahrām (FD VIII: 189). In reaction to this threat, Khusraw II decides to act and sends an ambassador to intrigue against Bahrām Čübīn. The man bribes Khātūn II and hires a Turanian man to assassinate Bahrām. The man bears different names in different texts which can be seen in the chart below:

Chart 28.

	Names for the man sent by Khusraw II to the court of the Turanian king	The names written without diacritic marks
DN	Hurmuzd-Jarābzīn (DN: 102)	هرمرد حرابزین
YQ	Bahrām-Jarābzīn (YQ: 193)	بهرام حرابزین
TB	Hurmuz (TB I: 1001)	هرمر
BL	Mardān-Šāh (BL II: 804, 1015)	مردان ساه
FD	Khurrād-Burzīn (FD VIII: 190–4)	حراد برزین
TB	Hurmuz-Jarābzīn (TB: 676–7)	هرمر حرابزین
NH	Hurmuzd-Jarābzīn (NH: 386)	هرمرد حرابزین
BKh	Dāhījild-Hurmuz (BKh: 102)	داهی حلد هرمر
MJ	Khurrād-Burzīn (MJ: 78)	حراد برزین

At first, the names seem to be very different. Four groups or categories can be formed. In the first group, the common denominator is the name Hurmuzd/Hurmuz, which appears in the texts of al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, *Nihāyat* and Ibn al-Balkhī. Most of the names in this category are two-part names and, except for Ibn al-Balkhī, the name Hurmuzd/Hurmuz appears as the first part of the name. Ibn al-Balkhī's name, Dāhījild-Hurmuz, is an exception both for the order and combination of the name. Al-Ṭabarī's single name is an exception in the group as well. In the original

source, I would suggest, the name was probably had two parts and for one reason or another al-Ṭabarī abbreviated it.

The second group is formed around the name Jarābzīn, which appears in the texts of al-Ya'qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭa'ālibī and *Nihāyat*. In the accounts of al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭa'ālibī and *Nihāyat*, the name Hurmuzd-Jarābzīn is the same. It is remarkable that this is the first time that a connection by wording between al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭa'ālibī or *Nihāyat* and al-Ṭa'ālibī occurs.

Firdawsī and *Mujmal al-Tawārīkh* form the third group. The name Khurrād-Burzīn is one sign, in addition to the *Mujmal*'s writer's numerous mentions of Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma* that confirms *Mujmal*'s use of Firdawsī's text. The fourth category is formed by Bal'amī alone and his name Mardān-Šāh, which has no apparent links to other texts. Two-part names with Mardān as the first part appear in the texts of al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭa'ālibī and *Nihāyat* such as Mardān Bih Qahrimān and Mardān-Sīna but they always refer to other characters.

If one scrutinizes the names written without diacritic marks two names are similar. They are Khurrād-Burzīn (خراد برزین) and Jarābzīn (جرابزین). The reading Khurrād-Burzīn is from Khalighī-Moṭlagh's edition of the *Šāhnāma*, but the Dihkhudā dictionary gives the pronunciation as Kharrād-Barzīn (Dihkhoda, 1373: 8455). The readings Kharrād-Barzīn and Jarābzīn are quite similar. If one alters the place of the dot of the first letter changing it from *khā'* to *jīm* and removes the letters *dāl* and *rā'* in between, Kharrād-Barzīn can easily become Jarābzīn. All these changes and errors are plausible in a copyist's work. We should also take into account that Firdawsī's and *Mujmal*'s name, whether it be Khurrād-Burzīn or Kharrād-Barzīn, is attested in *Šāhnāma* and other Persian classical literature whereas Jarābzīn is not. Therefore, Jarābzīn is likely to be an Arabic version of the Persian name written as it is in *Šāhnāma*.

3.4.4. The assassination of Bahrām Čübīn

Bahrām Čübīn is killed in Turan in all the versions, and, except for the short versions of Ibn Qutayba, al-Maqdisī and Gardīzī, all the texts identify the assassin as a local Turanian hired by Khāqān IV's wife, Khātūn II. Only Firdawsī and *Mujmal* name the killer as Qulūn (FD VIII: 196; MJ: 78). It is noteworthy that al-Dīnawarī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, and *Nihāyat* mention an ominous day called *Rūz-Wahrān* or the day of Mars, which is the twentieth day of every month in the Persian calendar (DN: 104; FD VIII: 200; IB: 681; NH: 388). On that day Bahrām Čübīn refuses to meet anyone except his trusted men. He fears the *Wahrām*-day because the astrologers have previously warned him about it, saying that on that day he will face his death. In the story that actually happens.

3.4.4.1. Events leading to the assassination

The main narrative outline of the events leading to the assassination of Bahrām Čübīn is more or less similar in the long versions of al-Ya'qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, and *Nihāyat*. It includes the following episodes: Khusraw II sends Khurrād-Burzīn to Khāqān IV's court. He makes efforts to persuade Khāqān IV to either force Bahrām Čübīn out of his kingdom or to kill him, but fails. Khurrād-Burzīn turns to Khātūn II to court and convince her. Khātūn II contracts with a local Turanian to kill Bahrām Čübīn and Khurrād-Burzīn executes his plan. Firdawsī's version is the longest and most detailed and it is paraphrased in Appendix C.

A particularity of Firdawsī's account, among many other things, is that Khurrād-Burzīn finds the assassin, not Khātūn II. In the majority of the versions Khātūn II hires or finds the man.⁵⁹ Whispering a message in Bahrām's ear or bending towards him is found in the texts of al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 194), al-Dīnawarī (DN: 104), al-Ṭa'ālibī (TB: 682), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 388) and a hidden dagger (in a sleeve, belt or boot) appears in the texts of al-Dīnawarī (DN: 104), Bal'amī (BL II: 805), al-Ṭa'ālibī (TB: 681), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 388). Al-Mas'ūdī's version on Bahrām's death is abridged and does not contain many details. However, the end of it is unique. According to him, it was said that after the assassination and the burial, Bahrām Čübīn's head was brought from the sarcophagus by a Persian merchant and erected at the gates of Khusraw II's court (MS: 318).

3.4.4.2. Bahrām's last words

Before dying, Bahrām Čübīn utters his last words. This episode appears in the texts of al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 194), al-Dīnawarī (DN: 104), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 203–5), al-Ṭa'ālibī (TB: 682–3), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 388). On this occasion, Gurdiya rebukes her brother for his military campaigns in the versions of al-Ṭa'ālibī (TB: 682–3) and Firdawsī (FD VIII: 202–3), which seems to connect the two texts. Gurdiya's admonition is dealt with below (see 3.6.5). According to Firdawsī, Bahrām's last moments are as follows and paraphrased below:

- Bahrām makes some practical arrangements and appoints Yalān-Sīna as the leading general of his army and asks him to look after his sister. Bahrām advises them not to stay in the land of the Turanians but to seek Khusraw II's forgiveness. If Khusraw II is willing to forgive, they should show respect only to him (FD VIII: 204). Then he asks them to prepare a coffin for him and destroy the palace he had built in Ray. Bahrām orders a scribe to compose a letter to

⁵⁹ Al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 193), al-Dīnawarī (DN: 103–4), al-Ṭabarī (TB I: 1001), Bal'amī (BL II: 804–5), al-Ṭa'ālibī (TB: 679), *Nihāyat* (NH: 387), *Mujmal* (MJ: 78) and Ibn al-Aṭīr (AT: 367–8)

Khāqān IV in which he states that he never wanted anything bad for him and requests him to take care of his remaining troops. Bahrām’s eyes are filled with blood and he dies (FD VIII: 205).

A particularity of Firdawsī’s text is that he advises seeking Khusraw II’s forgiveness. Bahrām’s palace in Ray is also mentioned only by Firdawsī on this occasion. Other characteristics are more common: Bahrām writes a letter to Khāqān IV in the texts of al-Ya’qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat* and he appoints Mardān-Sīna or Yalān-Sīn as his successor in the texts of al-Dīnawarī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa’ālibī, and *Nihāyat*.

3.4.5. Gurdiya kills Khāqān IV’s second brother

After the death of Bahrām Čūbīn, Gurdiya sets out from Turan with Bahrām’s former troops. The events are manifested in three narrative motifs (VII/e, VII/f, VII/g).⁶⁰ In these episodes the versions diverge and three different story lines emerge: In the accounts of Firdawsī (FD VIII: 210, 215–8) and al-Ṭa’ālibī (TB: 684–5) Khāqān IV sends his brother to catch Gurdiya (VII/e), which connects the two texts; according to al-Ya’qūbī (YQ: 194), al-Ṭabarī (TB I: 1001), al-Ṭa’ālibī (TB: 685), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 389), Khāqān IV’s brother proposes to Gurdiya (VII/f) without success; and Gurdiya kills Khāqān IV’s brother (VII/g) in the texts of al-Ya’qūbī (YQ: 194), al-Ṭabarī (TB I: 1001), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 217–8), al-Ṭa’ālibī (TB: 686), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 390).

In the texts of al-Mas’ūdī and Ibn al-Balkhī Khāqān IV’s other brother is not identified, but a character that occupies the same narrative function appears. In al-Mas’ūdī, Gurdiya rides away with her troops and receives a message from Khāqān IV’s son (MS: 318); this is a detail which does not appear in other texts. According to Ibn al-Balkhī, Khāqān IV sends 12,000 men to follow Gurdiya. When the two armies meet, Gurdiya fights, kills the commander of the Turanian army and gains victory (BKh: 103). In the versions where Khāqān IV’s other brother appears, names for him are different:

Chart 29.

	Name of Khāqān IV’s second brother	The name written without diacritics
YQ	Naṭrā (YQ: 194)	نطرا
TB	Naṭrā (TB I: 1001)	نطرا
FD	Tuburg (FD VIII: 215–7, 232)	تبرگ / تبرک
TB	Anonymous (TB: 685–6)	-
NH	Bartagh / Yartagh (NH: 389–90, 394, 396)	برغ

⁶⁰ For more information on the narrative motives see Appendix A.

Two groups can be formed. One consists of the name Naṭrā employed by al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī. Al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī also appear together in the two above narrative motifs (VII/f, VII/g) which links them together. I suggest that the second group is formed by the names of Firdawsī (Tuburg) and *Nihāyat* (Bartagh/Yartagh). Phonetically the names are similar if we take into account the possibility of consonants changing place (t-b-r-g -> b-r-t-gh). This could easily take place with foreign (i.e., not Arabic or Persian) names.

Unfortunately, al-Ṭa'ālibī omits the name and we cannot connect it to either of the groups. However, as al-Ṭa'ālibī's account includes all three narrative motifs which mention Khāqān IV's brother and two of which are shared with Firdawsī and, furthermore, because al-Ṭa'ālibī and Firdawsī share a large amount of content elsewhere (see 1.6.9, 4.8), it is reasonable to suggest that if al-Ṭa'ālibī had used the name it would have been similar to that of Firdawsī.

Based on the three narrative motifs alone, two or three groups emerge. One is the pair of al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī. Second is the pair of Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī which appears in two of the three narrative motifs (VII/e, VII/g). The absence of Firdawsī in one of the narrative motifs (VII/f) is an exception which, in my opinion, cannot be attributed to the lack of material or absence of sources. As Firdawsī's account is the longest and probably includes material from many sources common with other texts in the corpus and because the connection between Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī is established, it is reasonable to suggest an emendation to attribute to Firdawsī's text the third narrative motif (VII/f) as well. For an unknown reason, Firdawsī wanted to omit the motif.

Interestingly, the two narrative motifs (VII/f, VII/g) appear in *Nihāyat* without connection to al-Dīnawarī or Bal'amī which often surface together with *Nihāyat*. Instead, here *Nihāyat* seems to connect with the duo Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī. This opens a completely new perspective on the sources of *Nihāyat*. However, this is an exception, probably a coincidence, and elsewhere in the corpus *Nihāyat* appears always either with al-Dīnawarī or Bal'amī.

The names of Khāqān IV's two brothers are different in different texts (3.4.1, 3.4.5). The same applies to the man who introduces Mihrān-Sitād to Hurmuzd IV (see 3.1.2). The differences can be attributed to careless work of copyists (or modern editors) or they can reflect different sources. A third example of this sort is the name of the wife of Bahrām's brother, Kurdī, who, in some sources delivers a message from Khusraw II to Gurdiya.⁶¹ The text of al-Ya'qūbī knows her as Abrakha (YQ:

⁶¹ Compare with the sister of Ādhīn-Jušnas who writes to Khusraw II (ṬB I: 995). Again al-Ṭabarī provides a detail which is unique but remotely similar to other versions.

195), *Nihāyat* as Arjiya (NH: 394–5) whereas al-Dīnawarī (DN: 108) and Firdawsī (FD VIII: 225) only mention the character without a name.⁶²

Albrecht Noth has coined an expression, “onomatomania”, to describe excessive or arbitrary use of names in Arabic historical writing. Furthermore, he divides the use of names into two categories: outright fictive names and the arbitrary use of familiar names (1994: 126–8). This might explain the variance of names here and elsewhere in the corpus (3.1.2, 3.2.5, 3.4.1, 3.4.3). It is possible that when the writers (or the copyists) have recognized in the text a character without a name, or with a badly written or a name of foreign origin, they simply invented a name to clear off the lacunae and to improve their text.

3.4.6. Destiny of Bisṭām and Bindūy and anti-Sasanian passages

The brothers Bisṭām and Bindūy are Khusraw II’s two maternal uncles and leading statesmen under the rule of Hurmuzd IV and Khusraw II. According to al-Dīnawarī, they were sons of Šāpūr, grandsons of Khurbundād (DN: 107; Shahbazi, 1989). Bisṭām and Bindūy began their careers close to the royal house but according to al-Dīnawarī (DN: 107), Bal’amī (BL II: 805), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 220), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 392), Bisṭām revolts and Khusraw II loses confidence in both of them. In the accounts of al-Ya’qūbī (YQ: 195), al-Dīnawarī (DN: 106), al-Mas’ūdī (MS: 318), Bal’amī (BL II: 805), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 220, 228), al-Ṭa’ālibī (ṬB: 670), *Nihāyat* (NH: 391) and *Mujmal* (MJ: 78–9), Khusraw II decides to execute Bisṭām and Bindūy. The uncles are mentioned in all the texts except Ibn Qutayba and al-Maqqdisī. In Firdawsī and *Mujmal* Bisṭām is called Gustham which links the two texts.

Bisṭām and Bindūy, together or separately, appear in the following nine narrative motifs: Hurmuzd IV is killed by Bisṭām and Bindūy (V/i), Bahrām Siyāwuš chases Khusraw II into a monastery (V/j), Bahrām Siyāwuš and Bindūy plan the assassination of Bahrām Čübīn (V/k), Khusraw II and Bindūy offer protection to Bahrām’s soldiers after their defeat (V/aa), Bisṭām revolts and crowns himself (VII/c), Gurdiya marries Bisṭām (VII/e), Bisṭām and Khusraw II are in correspondence with each other (VII/f), Bisṭām unites with the former troops of Bahrām Čübīn (VII/g), and Gurdiya kills Bisṭām (VII/p). Distribution of the narrative motifs in the texts is illustrated in the chart found in Appendix D.

Only the longer accounts such as al-Dīnawarī, Bal’amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat* write extensively on Bisṭām and Bindūy. Al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* cover all the nine narrative motifs whereas Bal’amī

⁶² Although here the pair Abrakha (البرخه) and Arjiya (الرحه) could be explained in a manner similar to the pair Tuburg and Bartagh/Yartagh. Without diacritics, the letters are the same but in different order.

covers seven and Firdawsī eight. In the corpus, it is rare that any text other than Firdawsī has a fuller account on any given detail. Bal'amī's text covers seven of nine narrative motifs but at the end of the story motifs are mentioned in passing and not elaborated further (BL II: 805). In general, al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* provide extensive material towards the end of the story. The revolt of Bisṭām is a case in point and it is important to compare Firdawsī's text to the duo of al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*. According to Firdawsī, Khusraw II decides to execute the uncles in the following way. Important content is paraphrased below:

- Khusraw II sends a messenger to Khorasan to deliver a message to Bisṭām (FD VIII: 219–20). In the message, Khusraw II orders that Bisṭām should come to him as quickly as possible. Bisṭām does not follow the order. Instead, he gathers his army and marches to Sārī, Āmul, and Gurgān. Khusraw II kills Bisṭām's brother Bindūy when the latter is intoxicated (FD VIII: 220).
- When Bisṭām hears of the fate of his brother, he laments and understands that Khusraw II aims to destroy him too for his role in the death of Khusraw II's father Hurmuzd IV (FD VIII: 220). He marches to the forests of Nārwan and allies himself with the people there. Wherever he sees the king's troops, he strikes. Meanwhile, Bahrām's brother Kurdī had come to Khusraw II and told him about Gurdiya's adventures with Khāqān IV's troops in Marv (FD VIII: 221). Bisṭām also hears that Bahrām has perished.
- Gurdiya, accompanied by Yalān-Sīnah and Īzad Gušasp, meets with Bisṭām. He explains what has happened to Bisṭām's brother Bindūy, laments over Bahrām and suggests that the two groups unite (FD VIII: 221–2). Then Bisṭām speaks to Yalān-Sīnah and asks his advice about marrying Gurdiya. Yalān-Sīnah talks with Gurdiya and she replies positively saying that if she takes a Persian man, her lineage will not be in danger (*az-ū tukhma-yi mā nah wīrān buwad*) (FD VIII: 222). Yalān-Sīnah gives Gurdiya's hand to Bisṭām and they marry.
- Khusraw II hears about Gurdiya's and Bisṭām's union and worries about the outcome. He realizes that all the forces he has sent to Āmul to fight them either did not come back or came back wounded (FD VIII: 223–4). Khusraw II suggests to his advisor Kurdī that they should write a letter to Gurdiya in which they persuade her to kill Bisṭām. Khusraw II also adds that whenever Bahrām deviated from the right path, his sister Gurdiya had always been benevolent (*hamīšah budī gurdiya nīk-khwāh*) (FD VIII: 224). Khusraw promises a great recompense for Kurdī if they succeed in their plan (FD VIII: 225).

- Kurdī replies that he prefers to send his own wife to deliver the message since this matter belongs to women, and especially to wise women (*bi-wīže zanī k-ū buwad rāy-zan*) (FD VIII: 225). Then, both Khusraw II and Kurdī write a letter to Gurdiya. Both letters are wrapped in one and Kurdī's wife delivers them to Gurdiya in the forest of Nārwan (FD VIII: 226–7). Gurdiya is glad about the news and confides the contents of Khusraw II's letter to only five close persons. Gurdiya invites them to the apartments near the place where she sleeps. At night, she goes to Biṣṭām's bed and places her hand over his mouth. With the help of the five persons they asphyxiate him (FD VIII: 228). Then Gurdiya explains to the rest of her men about the letter from Khusraw II.

Al-Dīnawarī's account includes a long account on Biṣṭām, including anti-Sasanian passages. The same content also appears in *Nihāyat* (NH: 391–3). The anti-Sasanian ideas are promoted by Bahrām Čübīn's former partisans together with Biṣṭām and Bindūy.⁶³ In al-Dīnawarī, Bindūy criticizes Khusraw II's squandering of the public treasury's money. In reaction to this, Khusraw II becomes furious and sends the head of the guards (*ṣāhib ḥarasi-hi*) to arrest and kill Bindūy. However, the opposite happens and Bindūy executes the man, vilifies the Sasanian dynasty and calls it treacherous. The news of the incident reaches Khusraw II and Bindūy is stoned to death in Ctesiphon (DN: 105–6). When Biṣṭām hears about his brother's fate, he turns against the Sasanian state and revolts. Bahrām's former partisans, led by Mardān-Sīna, unite with the troops of Biṣṭām. When the two meet, Mardān-Sīna says to Biṣṭām:

Why should Khusraw II have more right to kingship than you? You are the son of Sābūr b. Khurbundād, a true descendant of Bahman b. Isfandiyādh, and you are brethren of the Sasanian dynasty (*li-ikhwa banī sāsān*) and their associates in the royal power (*šurakā'u-hum fī al-mulk*). Come with us and we will acknowledge you as a sovereign leader (*nubāyi'u-ka*) and give Bahrām's sister Gurdiya in marriage to you! We have the golden throne that Bahrām brought from Ctesiphon. Sit on it and invite yourself! If your family derives from the descendants of Dārā b. Bahman Sīnḥālbūn and if you grow mightier and your army grows in number, then march to

⁶³ The Sasanians are mentioned sometimes in a negative light in other sources such as al-Ya'qūbī, who relates that Bahrām Čübīn wrote to the commanders of Khusraw II and informed them about the bad policy (*bi-sū' madhhab*) of the Sasanians (YQ: 192), or Firdawsī, who describes Bahrām threatening to destroy the Sasanians completely (*zi bun bar-kanam tukhm-i sāsāniyān*) (FD VIII: 188). But these are sporadic examples are always associated with Bahrām Čübīn, who is expected to show antipathy towards the Sasanians anyway. Al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* are the only authors who associate these anti-Sasanian ideas with Biṣṭām and Bindūy after the death of Bahrām Čübīn.

[meet] deceitful Khusraw II, fight against him and try to seize his kingship (*wa-ḥāwalta mulka-hu*). If you obtain what you desire, this is what we want and what you want, and if you are being killed, you are being killed. [More importantly], you seek to gain the kingship and that will surely make you the most famous and that will be the most outstanding feat for the [future] memory of you (DN: 107).

After this scene, the text describes a correspondence between Khusraw II and Biṣṭām. First, Khusraw II sends a letter to Biṣṭām:

I have been informed that you've taken a treacherous and sinful path with Bahrām's vicious former partisans and that they have painted ideas in your mind that are not appropriate to you. They brought you to attack the kingdom and cause havoc and corruption in it without your knowing what I had in mind for you and what feelings I harboured about you. Leave the ongoing transgressions and come to me peacefully and you shall not grieve over the death of your brother Bindūy any more (DN: 107–8).

Biṣṭām replies to Khusraw II:

Your letter, in which you told about your lies (*khadī'ati-ka*), wrote about your machinations and expressed your anger, has reached me. Go through and consider your orders (*wa-dhuq wa-bāl amra-ka*). Be aware that you are not more entitled (*lasta bi-aḥaqq*) to this rule (*'amr*) than I am. Instead, I am more entitled to it than you because I am the descendant of Dārā b. Dārā, vanquisher of Alexander the Great (*muqārī' al-iskandar*), unlike you, the Sasanians. You dominated us denying our rights and oppressed us. Your Sasanian father was nothing but a shepherd of sheep and if his father, Bahman, had known about these matters properly, the kingship would not have been taken from him [and transferred] to his sister Humāy (*ukhti-hi khumānī*) (DN: 108).

The above discussion is found only in al-Dīnawarī's text and it can be read as an introduction to the theme of legitimacy dealt with in detail in the following section 3.5. In the above discussion, the names refer to the origins of the Sasanian dynasty as it is known in the Arabic and Persian sources. Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma*, for instance, refers to two different stories explaining the role of Bahman in the nascence of the Sasanian dynasty. Both stories are reflected in Arabic and Persian historiography such as al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Balkhī (Khaleghi-Motlagh, 1988). According to the first story, Bahman

had two sons Dārā and Sāsān and three daughters Humāy (*khumānī*), Bahmandukht, and Farnak. Bahman designated his pregnant daughter Humāy, impregnated by Bahman himself, to be his successor. Sāsān, Bahman's other son, unhappy with the decision, took a wife from Nīšāpūr who gave him two sons. The second son, also named Sāsān, was the grandfather of Ardašīr Pāpkān, founder of the Sasanian empire (FD V: 482–4). According to the second story, consistent with the account in the *Kārnāmag*, Dārā died in the war with Alexander the Great and his son, named Sāsān went to India and took a wife there. His descendants were all named Sāsān down to the fourth generation, his great-great-grandson being the father of Ardašīr (FD VI: 39–40; Khaleghi-Motlagh, 1988).

As Alexander the Great is mentioned, al-Dīnawarī's account seems to equate with the second story. The main interest here relies on Bahman as the last representative of the Kayanids, the dynasty preceding the Sasanians, and how the royal rule is to be transmitted to the successor of Bahman or the first representative of the Sasanian dynasty. In principle, all Bahman's children are legitimate inheritors. The name of the inheritor *per se* is not important as it could be Sāsān, Dārā or any of the children. The rightful procedure of royal transmission is more important than the inheritor of the royal lineage. This is Bisṭām's main argument to legitimate his position. The idea of the transmission of royal *farr*,⁶⁴ not only from a king to his successor, but, successively, from the last king of a given dynasty to the first of the following royal house, represents a widespread model adopted by Arabic and Persian historians describing pre-Islamic Persia (Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 b: 3–4).

Where did these anti-Sasanian ideas originate? Were they part of al-Dīnawarī's sources or did the author modify his text? These are legitimate questions because the anti-Sasanian tendency associated with Bisṭām and Bindūy appears only in al-Dīnawarī and Nihāyat. According to Sárközy, who analysed the anti-Sasanian passages in al-Dīnawarī's text based on Jackson-Bonner's English translation, in the late Sasanian dynasty many accounts circulated on the descent of the ruling family: both Sasanian official records and critical voices challenging the official interpretation (2015: 285). Taking this possibility into account, al-Dīnawarī's text might reflect one of these non-official accounts.

⁶⁴ *Farr*, a word derived from Pahlavi *xwarrah* and Avesta *xʷarənah*, is a concept which designates royal fortune, magical power or more commonly "glory", "splendour", "luminosity", and "shine". The concept is widely attested in Zoroastrian texts associated with stars and great luminaries such as Ahurā Mazdā and Mithra (Gnoli, 1999).

In any case, it is hard to imagine that the status of the Sasanian rulers and their legitimacy would have inspired a 9th-century Muslim author to create these passages from his imagination or to modify the text considerably. Al-Dīnawarī's text must be largely based on an earlier source. We do not know whether or not *K. al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl* was commissioned and if it was, what the political and identitarian affiliations of its patron were. It is known, however, that some Abbasid dynasties such as the Tahirids, Samanids and Ghaznavids traced their lineage back to pre-Islamic Iran (see 1.4.3) but, as far as I know, we do not have any texts suggesting that Muslim authors or writers of dynastic histories retroactively engaged in refuting the legitimacy of past kingdoms such as the Sasanians. Rather, it seems that Islamic dynasties who, for various reasons, wanted to claim pre-Islamic Iranian descent chose a 'suitable candidate' (Rustam, Yazdagird III, or some other) from the past and created a lineage to prove their claim. Therefore, the anti-Sasanian passages in *K. al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl* and *Nihāyat* must go back to the Arabic translation and ultimately the Pahlavi original. It is possible that al-Dīnawarī's version reflects a textual tradition and a Pahlavi text that included anti-Sasanian passages whereas in other original versions they were absent.

3.5. Legitimacy of royal power – How Bahrām's desire for the kingship is depicted

The legitimacy of royal power is perhaps the most important underlying moral content of the Bahrām Čübīn stories (Czeplédy, 1958: 32–43; Rubin, 2004: 254–73). After all, Bahrām Čübīn was a rebel and usurper without a right to kingship (at least from the Sasanian point of view). It is rather clear that if a story about Bahrām Čübīn was written in the Sasanian milieu, it is unimaginable that the royal legitimacy goes unnoticed. The original story in Middle Persian most probably had a moral message for its audience.

In the corpus, the theme of legitimacy surfaces repeatedly and in different contexts. Legitimacy is often related to the remote past, founding figures of the Sasanians or other important figures in the transmission of the kingship. Donner discusses styles of legitimation in the context of early Islamic tradition (1998: 98–122). I am aware, of course, that the context Donner refers to is not quite the same as that of the Bahrām Čübīn stories transmitting late Sasanian material and Persian cultural heritage. However, the discussion in the corpus seems to reflect the same principal ideas of legitimacy. In addition to piety as a form of legitimation, Donner discusses genealogical, theocratical and historicizing legitimation. The three latter categories fit well to the context of Bahrām Čübīn and examples of them are found in many passages within the corpus. Ethnic or genealogical legitimation surfaces in passages where royal lineage or lack of it is touched upon (see 1.4.4, 3.4.6, 3.5.2, 3.5.6, 3.5.7). Theocratic legitimation appears when Bahrām Čübīn is accused of being disrespectful to gods and, conversely, when the king, Hurmuzd IV or Khusraw II, is described as following the will of a Zoroastrian god (see 3.5.2, 3.5.8, 3.5.5, 3.5.9). Historicizing legitimation emerges, for instance, when Bahrām Čübīn refers to the examples of past legendary heroes who were in a situation similar to his and succeeded in whatever they were essaying (3.4.6, 3.5.2, 3.5.8).

In the Arabic and Persian source texts, the theme of legitimacy is reflected on various occasions. At least six narrative motifs can be distinguished: Bahrām deems Khusraw II a better ruler than Hurmuzd IV (IV/m), Bahrām's scurrilous behaviour with Khusraw II before their fight (V/d), Bahrām ascends the throne (IV/g), Khusraw II's miraculous escape after the fight with Bahrām (V/x), Bahrām halting at the house of an old woman (VI/c), and the hunting wild ass episode (IV/f). In addition, the theme is discussed in some other passages.

3.5.1. Bahrām Čübīn deems Khusraw II a better ruler than Hurmuzd IV

At the beginning of the revolt, Bahrām Čübīn expresses the idea that Khusraw II is a better ruler than Hurmuzd IV and the kingship should be handed over to him. There are three versions of the event.

Al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Aṭīr simply state that Bahrām Čübīn deems Khusraw II a better ruler than Hurmuzd IV (*aṣṣaḥ li-l-mulk min-hu*) (ṬB I: 993; AṬ: 365) after the revolt without further developing the theme. In the versions of Bal'amī and Firdawsī, Bahrām wants to sow animosity with Hurmuzd IV and he falsely pretends to pledge loyalty to Khusraw II. This episode is connected in the story to Bahrām minting coins in the name of Khusraw II, which is Bahrām's other scheme to make Hurmuzd IV suspicious of his son's intentions and therefore undermine the kingdom.⁶⁵ According to Bal'amī, Bahrām orders one of his leading generals, without Khusraw II's knowledge, to act as Khusraw II's messenger and to deliver a message and declare that Khusraw II orders Bahrām Čübīn and his troops to pledge allegiance to Khusraw II and refuse obedience to Hurmuzd IV (BL II: 777).⁶⁶ The army pledges loyalty to him without knowing that it was misled by Bahrām. Then they mint coins. In the text of Firdawsī, the storyline is different and Bahrām mints coins first and then writes a letter to Hurmuzd IV where he pledges loyalty to Khusraw II (FD VII: 610). Gardīzī's version differs from these two because it emphasizes Bahrām's army's independent role in dethroning Hurmuzd IV and putting Khusraw II in his place (see 3.2.8). Therefore, the army, independently of Bahrām and his schemes, approves Khusraw II as the king. After this, Bahrām withdraws his army and starts the war against Khusraw II (GD: 99).

In all the texts, the approval of Khusraw II as king is either Bahrām's scheme or a fleeting episode in the unravelling of the events which lead to Bahrām's ascension to the throne and war with Khusraw II. In no text does Bahrām stay loyal to Khusraw II and he soon becomes Bahrām's fierce enemy. In some versions such as al-Dīnawarī (DN: 94) Bal'amī (BL II: 789–90), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 23, 29), and *Nihāyat* (NH: 370), Bahrām Čübīn accuses Khusraw II of being implicated in his father's murder, which, in Bahrām's view, delegitimizes Khusraw II as a ruler.

In the trio of al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat*, Bahrām's claim that he will rule the kingdom until Hurmuzd IV's other son, Šahriyār (DN: 94; BL II: 778, 788–9, 834; NH: 370), reaches maturity is a very

⁶⁵ The motif is very common and occurs in eight versions of al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 190), al-Dīnawarī (DN: 86), al-Mas'ūdī (MS I: 313), Bal'amī (BL II: 777–8, 835, 1013), Firdawsī (FD VII: 607–611), al-Ṭa'ālibī (ṬB: 659), *Nihāyat* (NH: 361) and *Mujmal* (MJ: 77).

⁶⁶ In the parallel manuscript, Bal'amī's version is more straightforward and Bahrām simply orders his men to pledge loyalty to Khusraw II (BL II: 1013)

different motif (see 3.2.9). It casts new light on Bahrām's intentions because in these three texts Bahrām's final aim is not to usurp the power for himself but to pass it to Šahriyār, a legitimate heir to the crown. In this light, Bahrām can be seen as a sort of middleman in the rightful succession to power. *De facto*, al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* do not give any legitimacy for Bahrām's kingship as such.

3.5.2. Bahrām's scurrilous behaviour with Khusraw II before the fight

Bahrām and Khusraw II meet at the Nahrawān River before their first fight and exchange words in the accounts of al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 191), al-Dīnawarī (DN: 89–90), al-Ṭabarī (ṬB I: 993, 997), al-Mas'ūdī (MS I: 314), Bal'amī (BL II: 783–4), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 16–35), al-Ṭa'ālibī (ṬB: 663–5), *Nihāyat* (NH: 365–6), and Ibn al-Balkhī (BKh: 100). The dialogue is important because Bahrām challenges Khusraw II's right to power and the legitimacy of royal power in general is discussed. The theme is elaborated in the accounts of Bal'amī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, and *Nihāyat* in which a similar structure is recognizable but the contents are quite different. Khusraw II approaches Bahrām reverently and offers him a high position in the court if he returns to obedience. Bahrām turns down all the propositions and speaks scurrilously against Khusraw II.

Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* share content. In both of them Khusraw II and Bahrām meet on the plain of Jalūlā whereas in other texts the place of encounter is at the Nahrawān River. First, Khusraw II offers Bahrām a high position in the court if he returns to obedience. Bahrām answers vehemently and says that if Khusraw II really is Hurmuzd IV's son he would not have appointed people to blind and dethrone him, actions which Khusraw II denies. Then Bahrām threatens to take vengeance on Hurmuzd IV's enemies and all those who acted unjustly toward him and overthrow Khusraw II so that Hurmuzd IV could retake the throne. Khusraw II gets angry and calls Bahrām an evildoer (*fāsiq*). In Bal'amī's text, Khusraw II asks what role Bahrām would have in the transmission of royal power (*mulk*) or in the royal house (*ahl-i mulk*). Khusraw II then wonders where Bahrām's sympathy for Hurmuzd IV had come from since not long ago he rebelled against the king. They call each other names and Bahrām reiterates his desire to dethrone Khusraw II and give the throne back to Hurmuzd IV (BL II: 783–4; NH: 365).

In al-Ṭa'ālibī's text, Khusraw II addresses Bahrām Čūbīn reverently and offers him high status in his court. Bahrām answers with insults, calls Khusraw II son of an adulteress and threatens to kill him. Then Khusraw II continues respectfully and asks Bahrām if he has not heard the three following proverbs: "Kiss the hand that you cannot cut" (*yad lā yumkinu-ka qaṭ'a-hā qabbal-hā*), "He is grazing

on the falsehood and [even] settles on it" (*al-baghā murta'u-hu wa-khayyam*), "For the truth, the [steady] state, for the falsehood, the [aimless] wandering" (*li-l-ḥaqq dawla wa li-l-bāṭil jawla*) (TB: 664–5).

Al-Ṭa'ālibī's proverbs serve the motif of the episode as they put in question Bahrām's intentions and relate a moral message. However, the passages are unique in the corpus which implies editing, rewriting, or al-Ṭa'ālibī's original innovation. Firdawsī's description of Bahrām's and Khusraw's dialogue is long (FD VIII: 16–34) and deserves a closer look. The important content is summarized below:

- Bahrām Čübīn brings up Khusraw II's Turanian origins and calls him king of the Alans (*alān-šāh*) and therefore discredits his right to royal power.⁶⁷ Bahrām claims that the people call him the king and that the Iranians hate Khusraw II and want to uproot his dynasty (FD VIII: 16–18). He also claims that Khusraw II blinded Hurmuzd IV, or, at least, gave the order to do so which is disrespectful to the order of God (FD VIII: 22–3, 28–9). Khusraw II reminds Bahrām that he has no wisdom, no manners (*āyīn*) or royal *farr* to be the king. Khusraw II enjoys the right to the crown because he is the son of Hurmuzd IV and grandson of Anūšīrvān (FD VIII: 18, 21, 25). He points out that Bahrām has no home, no wealth, no country and no lineage (*nižād*) to be the king. Knowledge, lineage and sovereignty is granted to the one who is most deserving of it, most wise and most compassionate (*bī-āzār*). God created kingship from justice, skill and lineage (FD VIII: 23–4). Khusraw II invokes Zoroaster and the book of *Zand* as an authority to justify his position. He claims that he received the kingship directly from God and that, for instance, Luhrāsp and Guštāsp have accepted the message of Zoroaster before him (FD VIII: 24, 31).
- Bahrām justifies his right to kingship by historical events; he mentions the Arsacids (*aškāniān*), Ardašīr, Bābak's grandson, and the fact that Sasanians have ruled for 500 years. He claims that Arsacids should have taken the rule after Ardašīr and says that his intention is to wipe the Sasanians from the face of the earth (FD VIII: 25–7).
- Khusraw II questions Bahrām's noble origins. He affirms that there was a minuscule army that came from the city of Ray, united with Alexander's troops, and cooperated with the

⁶⁷ Hurmuzd IV's wife and Khusraw II's mother was a Turanian princess (Khātūn I). The Alans were an ancient Iranian tribe that spoke Turkic languages, a reference that Firdawsī uses pejoratively to point out Khusraw II's Turanian origins.

Byzantines (*miyān-hā bi-bastand bā rūmiyān*) but they only seized the throne from the Kayanids (FD VIII: 26). Khusraw II also points out that the filthy Māhyār, who killed Dārā and terminated the lineage of the Kayanid *héritier* Isfandiyār, came from Ray (FD VIII: 27). To this Bahrām answers belligerently that he will uproot the remains of the Kayanids as well (*bīkh-i kayān rā zi bun bar kanam*). In Khusraw II's view, Bahrām has become ungrateful, drunk on success, and he works with the devil (*dīw*) (FD VIII: 28).

- Bahrām boasts of his military achievements over Khāqān II and claims to be descended from the lineage of Āriš and to be the grandson of Gurgīn-Mīlād (FD VIII: 29). Khusraw II is not convinced and reminds him that Āriš was only a subject under the rule of Manūčīhr, not a king. Bahrām answers that Bābak Ardašīr and the lineage of the Sasanians derives from shepherds. Khusraw II asks whether it was not so that when Dārā died the crown was given to the Sasanians (FD VIII: 33).

Firdawsī's text sums up all the salient points about the legitimacy of royal power: proper lineage, favour of the gods, moral actions and royal *farr*. When royal legitimacy is dealt with in other texts, the discussion always revolves around these themes.⁶⁸ In the *Šāhnāma*, Firdawsī opposes the prince of religion (Khusraw II) and Ahriman (Bahrām), royal Kayanid lineage and menial Arsacid descent, legitimate king and a slave. In other words, Bahrām cannot be the king because he does not belong to the royal family, his actions are immoral, ungodly and devoid of royal *farr*. Czeplédy too refers to the dialogue in *Šāhnāma* and focuses on the moral and legitimacy aspects of the story, antagonism between the religion and right conduct represented by Khusraw II and the evilness of the false pretender represented by Bahrām (1958: 25–28). It is noteworthy that Bahrām Čūbīn recognizes himself as a member of the Arsacids in opposition to the Kayanids (here equated to the Sasanians). He claims that now is the time of the Arsacids to rule (*kunūn takht wa-daihīm rā rūz-i mā-st*): 500 years have passed and the Sasanian dynasty should step aside.

Multiple times during the conversation, Khusraw II calls Bahrām a sinner or evildoer who does not respect the Zoroastrian God or the religion (FD VIII: 14, 17, 18, 21). In *Šāhnāma*, in addition to this passage, there are other references to *Zand* which always seem to underline the legitimacy of

⁶⁸ Proper lineage is discussed in the accounts of al-Dīnawarī (DN: 94), al-Ṭabarī (TB I: 995–6, 997), Firdawsī (FD VII: 601–7; FD VIII: 23–34, 64–6, 125–6, 188–9, 202), *Nihāyat* (NH: 369, 370, 379); the favour of the gods or heavenly mandate is discussed in the texts of Bal'amī (BL II: 784, 788, 789), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 61–2, 69, 123), *Nihāyat* (NH: 369) and moral behaviour in the accounts of al-Dīnawarī (DN: 99), al-Ṭabarī (TB I: 999), Bal'amī (BL II: 784), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 35), al-Ta'alībī (TB: 669, 673, 682–3), *Nihāyat* (NH: 380).

the Sasanians and the royal *status quo* (FD VIII: 61, 69, 123, 164). In opposition to *Zand*, the book *Kalīla wa-Dimna* and Bahrām Čübīn reading it seem to evoke rebellious connotations in *Šāhnāma* (FD VIII: 9) as well as in al-Dīnawarī's text (DN: 89). The book embodies the idea of sly and cunning teachings and anti-state actions.

3.5.3. Bahrām ascends the throne

Bahrām ascending the throne and assuming the royal functions is mentioned in nine texts. In the accounts of al-Mas'ūdī (MS I: 316), Bal'amī (BL II: 786), Ibn al-Balkhī (BKh: 102) and *Mujmal* (MJ: 77), the event is mentioned in passing only. The longer versions such as al-Ṭabarī (ṬB I: 999) (Ibn al-Aṭīr's [AT: 367] version follows that of al-Ṭabarī closely but is shorter), Bal'amī (BL II: 789–90), Firdawsī (FD VII: 587–9), al-Ṭa'ālibī (ṬB: 669) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 370–1) describe in a few words the reactions that Bahrām's kingship provoked in his surroundings. The reactions explain how the writers wanted to depict the legitimacy of Bahrām's kingship. Furthermore, Bal'amī (BL II: 789) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 370) are apparently linked because they both mention Bahrām assuming the royal functions in connection with the discussion of Hurmuzd IV's younger son Šahriyār becoming the king later (3.2.9). In the text of al-Ṭabarī, Bahrām is seen as a usurper and is given no legitimate claim to power:

The prominent leaders and great men of state gathered around him. Bahrām spoke to them, abused and blamed Khusraw II. Several sessions of argument and disputation took place between him and the prominent leaders and all of them were averse to him. Nevertheless, Bahrām seated himself on the royal throne and had himself crowned, and the people gave him obedience out of fear. (ṬB I: 999)

Bahrām's position is therefore unnatural and conflicts with Persian customs according to the narratives. There is no possibility of justifying his position. Bal'amī (BL II: 789–90), Firdawsī (FD VII: 587–9) and al-Ṭa'ālibī (ṬB: 669) too describe negatively the reactions of the people to Bahrām's kingship. In contrast to these descriptions, in the text of *Nihāyat*, no one considers Bahrām's kingship wrong, no one stands against it and no one takes vengeance for his actions (NH: 371). Therefore, *Nihāyat* is the only version in which Bahrām's sitting on the royal throne provokes no criticism.

3.5.4. Letter of Bahrām Čūbīn to Khusraw II

Bahrām sends a letter to Khusraw II from Ctesiphon after he ascends the royal throne and assumes the royal responsibilities. By then, Khusraw II had fled to Azerbaijan and Byzantium to seek help for his troops. This passage appears only in Firdawsī's text:

In the title of the letter he said: From the blessed world / always I desire in my blessed heart;
That immediately you would wake up from dreaming / and that you would not take quickly any
harmful actions; Since when the Sasanian dynasty (*tukhm-i sāsāniyān*) / appeared within the
boundaries of the world; And their Empire appeared in the revolving world / [since then] from
them nothing but wickedness came about; First of them was Ardašīr, son of Bābkān, / from his
time the conflicts entered [in the world] for the first time; And from his sword the world became
dark / and all the celebrated men became malignant; I will talk first about Ardawān / about
those celebrated and bright-minded men; From their name the land became empty / and filled
with pain the dwellings of great men; You have surely heard what Sūkhṛā (= Sūfzāy)⁶⁹ / had to
endure from the filthy Pīrūz; Qubād was freed from the manacles / and by that governor he was
given justice; Malevolent Qubād acquired strength / virtues were washed away from his hearth
and he became faulty; Such a renowned man with pure heart he killed / and on him the hearts
of the celebrated men became harsh; [You should know that] no one should ever choose for his
family / wind instead of his own children; Strangers should not be chosen either / ivory should
not be sought amongst Indian wood; do not look for rubies amongst willow trees / until you the
Sasanians have lost all hope; When this letter is brought to you / may the first day of the month
of yours be fortunate; Next to me you'll have a splendid place / and we would be [close] like a
body and sleeve of the same shirt; There would be both calm and sleep in our place / whether
in darkness or sublime shining of the sun; When you come to me right away / my dark soul will
become bright again; I do not worry about Rome and their kings / since I will bring to my feet
their throne (FD VIII: 125–6).

In Firdawsī's text, Bahrām refers to the Sasanian past. This is another passage which can be placed under the rubric of archaizing features or historical references (see 3.1.6, 3.2.4.5, 3.2.8). Bahrām refers to the legend of Sūkhṛā, a Persian noble who had an important position in the

⁶⁹ In the *Šāhnāma* the name has many variants in spelling such as Sūfrāy, Sūfzāy and Sūqrāy. The context makes it clear that Firdawsī refers to the story of Sūkhṛā.

Sasanian state during the reigns of Pīrūz (r. 459–84), Balāš (r. 484–8) and Qubād I (r. 488–96). He is said to have held *de facto* power in the Sasanian state during those reigns at times when the actual king was in a weak position. Sūkhṛā fought against the Hephthalites, like Bahrām Čūbīn did, until a certain Šāpūr of Ray from the Mihrān family managed to have him executed (Schindler, 2012: 137–8). Al-Ṭabarī too compares Bahrām to Āriš and Sūkhṛā (ṬB I: 992–3) but not in a letter.

In addition, to evoke corruption and immorality within the Sasanian realm, it is uncertain how mentioning Sūkhṛā and related royal figures serves Bahrām’s agenda. In Firdawsī’s text, Bahrām seems to admire and idolize Sūkhṛā whose career shares some characteristics with that of Bahrām. However, if Sūkhṛā was killed by someone from the Mihrān family from Ray, which is also Bahrām’s place of origin, the idea of supporting Sūkhṛā’s agenda becomes somewhat unexpected and contradictory as Bahrām Čūbīn is sometimes associated with the family of Mihrān (see 1.1; Pourshariati, 2008: 101–4).

3.5.5. Khusraw II’s miraculous escape

Bahrām Čūbīn and Khusraw II fight two times. First, Bahrām gains victory and Khusraw II flees to Azerbaijan and Byzantium to seek help from king Maurice. The second time, with help from Byzantine forces and generals, Khusraw II succeeds and defeats Bahrām. In spite of the external military support, the final combat between Bahrām and Khusraw II is described as a duel. Bahrām chases Khusraw II up a mountain where he cannot escape. Bahrām’s victory seems certain but then something unexpected happens and Khusraw II is lifted up by some supernatural forces. Khusraw II’s escape is a turning point and decisive moment after which Bahrām is defeated.

According to al-Dīnawarī, the top of the mountain was lifted up as if Khusraw II was helped in some way (DN: 97). In al-Ṭabarī’s account, something supernatural that cannot be comprehended lifted Khusraw II up to a mountain when Bahrām was about to overcome him (ṬB I: 1000). According to al-Ṭa’ālibī, in the crucial moment a shining hand appears from the mountain and lifts Khusraw II up so that Bahrām could not reach him (ṬB: 665). A particularity of al-Ṭa’ālibī’s account is that Khusraw II seeks help from king Maurice after the supernatural intervention whereas in all the other texts it occurs before the intervention.

The texts of Bal’amī (BL II: 797), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 144–6) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 378) are linked together. In all of them Khusraw II gains power through praying to God and lamenting that Bahrām wrongfully seeks to usurp the royal power from him. Bal’amī and Firdawsī seem to have a strong connection because in both of them Bahrām expresses the idea that behind Khusraw II is a rock and

in front of him a dagger and both of them refer to an angel who helps Khusraw II. The question of the angel divides Bal'amī and Firdawsī. In Firdawsī's account an angel named Surūš appears and lifts Khusraw II to heaven. The angel tells Khusraw II that from now on he will be the king of the world and rule 38 years. Bahrām witnesses this and becomes downcast. Bal'amī refers to the angel but comments critically that the Persian magi who relate that an angel had lifted Khusraw II up to a mountain tell a lie (BL II: 797–8) which shows his critical use of sources. With regard to Sasanian kings in Pahlavi literature, divine intervention is not unheard of. For instance, in *Kārnamag*, the divine *farr* (see p. 151, n. 64) saved the life of Ardašīr I, founder of the Sasanian dynasty, when his wife attempted to poison him (Sárközy, 2015: 284).

These passages underline the idea of Khusraw II's royal legitimacy being approved by heavenly mandate. Not only the proper lineage but religion and God's favour are on Khusraw II's side. Even though Bahrām had an advantageous physical position and was about to deliver the *coup de grâce*, he could not reverse the inevitable heavenly order and Khusraw II's unwavering position.

3.5.6. Bahrām and his troops halt at the house of an old woman

After being defeated by Khusraw II's troops, Bahrām Čübīn and his troops flee to the land of the Turanians. On their way, they halt at the house of an old woman. The woman offers them barley bread and wine from a gourd instead of a proper cup. Bahrām addresses the old woman and asks about recent news. She tells him about the war that has recently taken place between Bahrām Čübīn and Khusraw II. Then Bahrām asks about the woman's opinion on the matter. Unaware of Bahrām's identity, the woman answers sincerely and condemns Bahrām's actions as unlawful and rebellious. This episode is found in al-Dīnawarī (DN: 98–9), Bal'amī (BL: 798–9), al-Ṭā'ālibī (TB: 672–4), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 151–3) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 379). The chart below contains the different versions of the woman's reply:

Chart 30.

DN	Bahrām asked, what do you say on the matter of Bahrām [Čübīn]? She replied: [Only] an ignorant man and fool claims the kingship without belonging to the royal family (DN: 98–9).
BL	Bahrām asked: Are the people saying that Bahrām acted rightly or unjustly? The woman said: All are saying that he acted unjustly and what right should Bahrām have to the royalty anyhow! He does not belong to the royal family. This same servitude should fall to Bahrām's lot so that he would live happily (BL II: 799).
TB	What do you say, mother, about Bahrām? Is he wrong or right when he wages war against Khusraw II? She answered: "By God, he is completely wrong because he revolted against his master and the son of his master and pulled the sword out against him."
FD	Bahrām said to her: O chaste woman / tell me your opinion in this affair.

	<p>Was this Bahrām's [action] out of wisdom / or did he chose [personal] desire [instead] of wisdom?</p> <p>Old woman said to him: O celebrated man / why the devil made your eyes dark</p> <p>Don't you know that when Bahrām, son of Gušasp / incited his cavalry against the son of Hurmuzd IV</p> <p>All who had wisdom laughed at him/ and no one counts him [any longer] among the distinguished men.</p> <p>(FD VIII: 152–3)</p>
NH	<p>And he [Bahrām] asked her: What do you say about Bahrām? Was he wrong or right [in what he did]? She replied: Certainly, he was wrong and ignorant in his claim for the kingship. He is not from the royal family and not entitled to it (NH: 379).</p>

On this point the versions are unanimous: without a proper lineage Bahrām cannot claim the kingship. A slave cannot be the king and even ordinary people like the old woman know this.

3.5.7. Qārin al-Jabalī al-Nihāwandī and Bahrām in the land of Qūmis

This episode is found in the versions of al-Dīnawarī (DN: 99), Bal'amī (BL II: 799) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 380). It is one of the rare narrative motifs that is not included in Firdawsī's version. The narrative content is as follows.

After being defeated by Khusraw II's army and having visited the old woman's guest house, Bahrām Čübīn continues his march towards the land of the Turanians. On his way, he passes through the land of Qūmis governed by Qārin al-Jabalī al-Nihāwandī (DN: 99). Qārin is a hundred years old and the governor of Khorasan, Qūmis and Jurjān, appointed first by Hurmuzd IV's father Kistrā Anūšīrwān and then by Hurmuzd IV. Qārin sends troops against Bahrām when he enters the territory. After the clash, they exchange messages. According to al-Dīnawarī, Qārin sends the following message to Bahrām Čübīn:

My duty towards the king Khusraw and his forefather is greater than my duty towards you. And the same applies to you, if you only knew that he [Khusraw II] honoured you! But your recompense to him was that you revolted against him and started a raging war within the Persian kingdom. The most you can do is to return, despairing and unhappy, to be an example to all the nations (DN: 99).

Bahrām Čübīn replies by insults and provocations and Qārin sends troops against him. According to al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*, Qārin sends his son to fight Bahrām. The latter defeats the troops and captures Qārin but releases him because of his old age. As can be expected, al-Dīnawarī's and *Nihāyat*'s wordings are very close to each other. In addition to this apparent affinity, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* are linked: in both texts Qārin is said to sit on a golden throne (*takht-i zarrīn*, *al-sarīr al-*

dhahab), the number of Qārin's troops is 12,000, and Qārin begs mercy and accuses his son of initiating the events when Bahrām threatens to kill him.

As in the episode of Bahrām halting at the house of the old woman, here the moral message is similar and clear. Bahrām has revolted against the king and can never claim the kingship lawfully. His actions are a negative example for all the nations which should not be followed.

3.5.8. Gurdiya questioning Bahrām's right to power

Especially in the account of Firdawsī, Bahrām's sister, Gurdiya, has an active role in the discussion of Bahrām's legitimacy for kingship. Firdawsī depicts how Bahrām's sister discusses Bahrām's aspirations to power on several occasions. The first occasion appears when Bahrām holds a council with the generals of his army after the revolt and discusses the legitimacy of his kingship. This long episode is not found in other texts. In the council, Bahrām ponders on the consequences of his further actions and considers whether or not he should fight Hurmuzd IV and seek the kingship. Firdawsī's text (FD VII: 594–607) is summarized below:

- Bahrām gives an opening speech before his army and summarizes their adventures so far (FD VII: 594–6). The men remain silent. Bahrām's sister appears and breaks the silence. She urges others to express their ideas (FD VII: 597).
- Īzad-Gušasp speaks up and comments on Bahrām's speech diplomatically. He praises Bahrām's qualities and states that his actions derive from the will of God. He affirms that they do not need to wage war with anyone, but, if Bahrām decides so, he would join (FD VII: 597). Yalān-Sīna warns Bahrām of ingratitude if he seeks more and points out that he already has been granted by God the army, treasures, a crown and throne (FD VII: 597).
- Bahrām throws a coin in the air and states that as long as the coin stays in the air a slave, referring to himself, can be king. Then Bahrām asks Bundā-Gušasp's opinion on seeking the kingship or not. He replies that if a knowledgeable and auspicious (*nīk pai*) man ascends the throne, his soul will reach the skies. It is better, he adds, to seek all the riches in the world than live life as a slave (FD VII: 599).
- Bahrām asks the chief scribe's opinion. He replies that the one who seeks to fulfil his ambitions, will obtain only what is suitable for him. Time and fate are purposeful actors and one should keep in mind that if God decides to grant something, it will be obtained without effort (*kūšiš na-yābad guzar*) (FD VII: 599).

- Then Hamidān-Guṣāsp comments by saying sceptically that if you are afraid of bad events that have not yet occurred, why do you seek the royal crown? You should perform the tasks that God created you for, not reach out for the dates if you are afraid of the thorns. The king's (*sar-i anjuman*) body and soul will not be at ease; instead, they are constantly torn by fear and troubles (FD VII: 600).
- Bahrām turns towards his sister and asks her opinion. She gives a long answer and disapproves of the chief scribe's ideas, saying that they should follow the customs of the ancient righteous kings (*bar āyīn-i šāhān-i pīšī rawīm*) and listen to their words (FD VII: 601). Gurdiya continues and enumerates many arguments on why Bahrām should not seek the kingship. She criticizes Bahrām and his men for being proud and selfish (*khūd kām*) which leads Bahrām astray [from the righteous path] (FD VII: 602). Then she relates an anecdote of Kāwūs who left the throne empty but no one ever had the courage to occupy it because they were not suited for it. When the Iranians finally suggested to Rostam that he would be suitable for the kingship, he replied angrily that the one who suggests that should face a narrow grave (FD VII: 602).
- Gurdiya continues and confirms that the subjects of the king never seek the throne even if their lineage were appropriate (FD VII: 603). She also asks Bahrām directly why he desires the kingship even though he is a slave (*rahī*) (FD VII: 604). She states: "The king Hurmuzd IV chose you to be a glorious fighter and the same was the lot of your grandfathers (*niyāgān-at hamčunīn nām dād*). Now you are turning this good fortune into evil. Do not desire the kingship because learned men would not call you a legitimate ruler (*kih dānā nakhwānad tū rā pārsā*)!" (FD VII: 604). Gurdiya finishes her speech and Bahrām knows that she has told the truth. However, Bahrām refrains from pursuing the virtuous path (*juz az rāh-i nīkī najūyad hamī*) (FD VII: 605).
- Yalān-Sīna intervenes and comments favourably on Bahrām's kingship and says that Hurmuzd IV will soon be gone and Bahrām will be considered the king of Iran (*barādar-at rā šāh-i īrān šumar*). According to him, there is no point in mentioning Kay Qubād, the Kayanids and their rule of a hundred thousand years, because their lineage died out a long time ago. He also mentions Hurmuzd IV's Turanian origins and reproaches him for having sent the insulting gifts to Bahrām and his army (FD VII: 605–6).
- Gurdiya replies vehemently saying that there is a devil in Yalān-Sīna's words. She asks him not to abuse the situation, incite Bahrām or put their family's lineage at stake (*tabār-i marā*

dar khurūš āwuri) (FD VII: 606). Then Gurdiya leaves the scene crying. Bahrām's men are impressed by her eloquence but Bahrām himself is annoyed and sad (*dil-i dīrah wa andīša-yi dīryāb*). Nevertheless, he continues to dream about the throne (*hamī takht-i šāhī namūdiš bih khwāb*) and orders singers and wine to be brought (FD VII: 607).

In the comments of Gurdiya and Bahrām's generals, the themes of proper lineage, heavenly mandate, and the relations between the king and his subjects surface again. In the end, the legitimacy of a king depends on God's favour. In addition to these themes, gratitude and moderation are mentioned as virtues that should be followed: Bahrām Čübīn has already gained much and he should not ask for more than what is his lot. Another occasion on which Gurdiya criticizes her brother is at Bahrām Čübīn's deathbed. This episode is referred to in the accounts of Firdawsī and al-Ta'ālibī. The passages in the *Šāhnāma* are paraphrased below:

- Gurdiya arrives at the deathbed of Bahrām Čübīn and reproaches him. She states that Bahrām has never bowed before the kings or gods (FD VIII: 202). She has always advised Bahrām not to break his loyalty to the king. If there remained only one daughter in the Sasanian family, she would reign over all of Iran, not a foreigner like Bahrām. Gurdiya claims that Bahrām never listened to her valuable advice and says that Bahrām should regret his actions and return to God. A calamity has come over us, she states (FD VIII: 203).
- Bahrām replies and admits that he did not pay attention to her words. He says that a devil led him astray but, similarly, the king Jamšīd and Kay-Kāwūs were led astray by demons (FD VIII: 203). Bahrām regrets all his bad actions and asks forgiveness from God. This is his fate, he says, and advises Gurdiya to pray to God (FD VIII: 204).

Again, the themes of proper lineage, loyalty towards the king and gods, and Bahrām's ingratitude (moral unsuitability), which seem to be interrelated, are discussed. Bahrām admits his mistakes, repents and acknowledges that fate finally determines the limits of his achievements. However, Bahrām refers to Jamšīd and Kay-Kāwūs as if their examples could serve as an approving argument for what he has done. The two legendary kings were led astray by demons too, and therefore the actions of Bahrām Čübīn should not be regarded as unprecedented. Somehow Bahrām justifies his past actions and links himself to the past kings. In addition to Firdawsī, al-Tabarī alludes once to Gurdiya commenting and accusing Bahrām on his deathbed (TB I: 998). According to al-Ta'ālibī, the scene is as follows:

She beats her face and tears her hair and says to Bahrām: “O my brother, this is the punishment of those who are ungrateful towards [their] benefactors (*man kafara awliyā’ al-ni’ma*) and those who rebel against [their] masters and fight kings.” Bahrām agrees and recites two verses of poetry in order to confirm his sister’s statement: “It is the destiny of evil that unjustly does harm to the man. It is never the man who does harm to himself.” Then Bahrām assigns Mardān-Sīna as the leader of his troops. Bahrām orders him to respect Gurdīya and consider that she has the same authority as Bahrām Čübīn (TB: 683).

Al-Ṭa’ālibī’s text conveys the same overall message, but at the same time the content is considerably different when compared with Firdawsī’s account. For instance, al-Ṭa’ālibī does not mention the legendary kings Jamšīd and Kay-Kāwūs or the daughters of the Sasanian family. The poem seems to be al-Ṭa’ālibī’s addition. However, the ingratitude, unjust rebellion, and indirect repentance are mentioned. Previous studies confirm that Firdawsī and al-Ṭa’ālibī are linked (see 1.6.9, 4.8) but this example suggests considerable editing and rewriting.

3.5.9. Bahrām Čübīn goes hunting wild ass

After the revolt, Bahrām Čübīn retreats to the wild and passes some time with some close men of his army. One day they go hunting wild ass. During the hunting trip Bahrām Čübīn receives supernatural powers from a woman, which is later interpreted by a Zoroastrian priest in the court of Hurmuzd IV as a decisive moment in the revolt of Bahrām. This narrative motif (IV/f) is found in the texts of Bal’amī (BL II: 776–7, 1014), Firdawsī (FD VII: 584–91) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 360–1).

The plot goes as follows: Bahrām goes hunting wild ass with some of his men. Bal’amī mentions only one man (Mardān-Šāh), Firdawsī two (Īzad-Gušasp, Yalān-Sīna) and *Nihāyat* one (Mardān-Šīna). After chasing the wild ass for some time, they arrive at a castle. The wild ass goes inside the garden and Bahrām follows it. His men stay outside and wait. Inside the castle Bahrām meets a beautiful woman or a fairy (*parī*). In the account of Bal’amī the woman is called simply “a girl” (*kanīzak*), in Firdawsī’s account “a crowned woman” (*zan-i tājdār*) and in *Nihāyat* “a girl” (*jāriya*). In the version of Firdawsī they have a conversation and the woman puts a crown on Bahrām’s head. After conversing with the woman for a while, Bahrām leaves the castle and rides back to his military camp. While riding back he remains silent and says nothing about the conversation with the woman. After these events, Bahrām’s scribe and another man – in the versions of Bal’amī and Firdawsī he is called Khurrād-Burzīn whereas in *Nihāyat* he is known as Hurmuzd-Jarābzīn (see 3.4.3) – flee from the camp and travel to Ctesiphon. They relate the events to Hurmuzd IV and he asks a Zoroastrian priest

– in *Nihāyat* he is called “judge of the judges (*qāḍī al-quḍāh*)” whereas in Bal’amī and Firdawsī “mobad of the mobads” (*mawbadān-mawbad*) – to interpret the events. He explains the events and the aetiology of Bahrām’s malevolent actions as follows:

Chart 31.

BL	[...] this girl, one of fairies (<i>parī</i>), is in love with Bahrām and wherever Bahrām stands before the enemy the girl arrives with her companions and they defeat Bahrām’s enemy (BL II: 777).
FD	[...] the wild ass was a demon (<i>dīv</i>), who lead Bahrām astray from the path of righteousness and filled his heart with falsehood (<i>kāstī</i>). The castle was a place of magic and on the throne sat an ungrateful witch (<i>zan-i jādwī nāsipās</i>), who showed Bahrām the way to impudence, [seeking the] crown and exalted throne (<i>takht-i buzurgī</i>) (FD VII: 591).
NH	[...] according to the priest (<i>qāḍī al-quḍāh</i>), the girl was a demon named al-Madhab and she is the one who will cause Hurmuzd IV’s deposition (<i>khal’</i>) and opposition [by the people] (NH: 361).

The wording is different but the main idea and interpretation are the same: the woman represents malevolent spiritual forces that incite Bahrām to rebel and turn against the royal and heavenly order of the state. These passages emphasize the idea of not only a physical but a spiritual battle between Bahrām Čübīn, possessed by demons, and Hurmuzd IV, and later his son Khusraw II, who both have God’s favour on their side.

Indeed, there are many prophecies or astrological predictions in the Arabic and Persian recensions of the Bahrām Čübīn story. These include the following: prophecy of Hurmuzd IV and Bahrām Čübīn by an astrologer who predicts the arrival of Hurmuzd IV as a king and describes Bahrām Čübīn’s physical appearance which helps identify him (I/a; YQ: 188, BL II: 765, FD: 496–7; NH: 352); Bahrām pierces sheep heads with his sword after he had left the court, which is seen by a trustee of Hurmuzd IV who interprets it as a prediction of Bahrām Čübīn’s campaign’s detrimental outcome (I/g; BL II: 767, FD VII: 510–11, IB: 644, NH: 354); the prophecy of a female augur appears in the story of Hurmuzd IV’s sending his vizier to apologize (IV/p; DN: 86–7, BL II: 779–81, FD VII: 617–23, NH: 361–3); a Christian monk foresees the outcome of Khusraw II’s military campaigns and the duration of his reign (V/o; BL II: 793, FD VIII: 81–5, NH: 372–3)⁷⁰; the death of Bahrām occurs on the day of *Wahrām* which is a bad omen told to Bahrām when he was young (VI/I; DN: 104, FD VIII: 200, IB: 681, NH: 388).

⁷⁰ In the accounts of Bal’amī and *Nihāyat*, the monk explains that his prophecies originate from the book of Daniel.

An interesting connection appears, since, according to Czeglédý, Bahrām Čübīn's character is reflected in Zoroastrian prophecies and eschatological writings in which the legitimacy of royal power is discussed too. Czeglédý identifies three different *vaticinia ex eventu* referring to Bahrām Čübīn in the *Jāmāsp-nāmag* (1958: 33–40). Two of these accounts cast Bahrām in a negative light and reflect the interests of the Sasanians who promoted the idea of their legitimacy to power (Shoemaker, 2018: 110). However, the third prophecy sees Bahrām not as a false pretender but the eschatological emperor and the heir of the legitimate heir of the Kayanians (Shoemaker, 2018: 112).

According to the first prophecy, a false pretender will arrive from Khorasan, seize power and disappear in the middle of his reign. Then the realm will be taken over by foreigners. After these events the victorious king will arrive and conquer territories and many cities from Byzantium. But under the reign of his sons, Iran's fortune again takes a downturn and times of misery follow at the end of Zoroaster's millennium. The Byzantines, Turks and the Arabs will devastate Iran after which the eschatological battle between Mihr and Khesm takes place (Czeglédý, 1958: 33). In the prophecy, Bahrām Čübīn is the false pretender and Khusraw II the victorious king. In the second prophecy, the false pretender comes from the south, not from Khorasan. According to Czeglédý, this too, refers to Bahrām as many believed that he was actually from the province of Fārs (Czeglédý, 1958: 34).

The third prophecy is the most interesting and extraordinary because it regards Bahrām positively, predicts his victory over Khusraw II and is relatively free of Sasanian redaction (Shoemaker, 2018: 111). If the interpretation of the last prophecy is accurate, it would mean that in addition to Sasanian influence emphasizing the Sasanian legitimacy for kingship, there was another faction in the Zoroastrian circles of the late Sasanian Empire who regarded Bahrām Čübīn as the eschatological emperor and the heir to the legitimate reign (Czeglédý, 1958: 37–8; Shoemaker, 2018: 112). This translates into even more complex influences and textual history behind the story of Bahrām Čübīn in Pahlavi. This might explain the anti-Sasanian passages in *K. al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl* and *Nihāyat* (see 3.4.6; DN: 107–8; NH: 391–3), meaning that they would reflect these alternative prophetic texts on Bahrām Čübīn discussed by Czeglédý. However, we must add that the positive legitimist ideas of the third prophecy are completely lacking in the Arabic and Persian versions: there are practically no favourable arguments for Bahrām Čübīn's kingship.

3.6. Attitudes towards Bahrām Čübīn manifested in the texts

I am convinced that the underlying motif of the original Pahlavi versions was moral and legitimist. The texts reveal, however, more nuanced attitudes toward Bahrām Čübīn, and both explicitly positive and negative comments are found. In the beginning, Bahrām Čübīn is seen as a brave and valiant general, but the revolt is a turning point: after the revolt, positive descriptions fade away and change to criticism. This is an important point. As stated above, until the beginning of the revolt, al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, *Nihāyat*, and Gardīzī regard Bahrām not as a malevolent agitator and usurper but rather as a responsible and loyal general and victim of intrigue (3.2.8).

Positive comments are many. For example, the narrative motif of Hurmuzd IV praising Bahrām (III/j) is found in the accounts of al-Dīnawarī (DN: 84), al-Ṭabarī (ṬB I: 993), Firdawsī (FD VII: 550–1), al-Ṭa'ālibī (ṬB: 649), and Ibn al-Balkhī (BKh: 99). Hurmuzd IV praises Bahrām for the victory over the Turanian kings Khāqān II and Khāqān III, and send him gifts. In the *Šāhnāma*, laudatory passages are manifold in the beginning of the story. In the following passage the chief scribe speaks to Bahrām after the victories:

Then entered the chief scribe / in this manner he said: “O strong champion!” Even the heroes Farīdūn or Nūšīnrawān / have not seen a champion like you. To you belongs the heroism as well as the throne and shackles / sometimes giving asylum and sometimes damaging [the enemy]. All the Iranian cities live for you / and all the champions are servants to you. Because of you, we have exalted fortune ahead of us / and we are under protective hands. You are a commander from the race of commanders / happy should be the mother who gave you birth. You are of a fortunate race and strength (*pāi*) / in every manner you are the splendour of our capital. (FD VII: 543–544)

In the text of Firdawsī, even Khāqān III admires Bahrām's accomplishments after his victorious battle against Khāqān II and describes him as follows:

Like this, he answered: “We considered / the commander of this army to be weak. However, when Bahrām engages in a battle / no one in the world has ever seen a horseman [like him]. When he fights, he is greater than Rustam / and the brave warriors hesitate to come before him. His army was not even one-hundredth of ours / but [even] the best of our warriors was a child [compared to his]. God has shown him his grace / and if I speak more, you should not listen to me.” (FD VII: 547)

To give another example, Bal'amī too describes Bahrām with numerous positive and laudatory attributes. For example, he states that among the Persian kings there were only two who are famous for their bravery (*mardī*) and willingness to fight (*mubārazat*): Bahrām Gūr and Bahrām Čübīn (BL II: 763). In the same vein, al-Ṭabarī says that Bahrām is one of the three men in Persia who excelled in archery (TB I: 992–3). Bal'amī's emphasis on Bahrām's eagerness to make peace with Hurmuzd IV before the killing of the vizier Yazdān-Bakhšiš (BL II: 779, 781; 3.2.10), is absent in other texts and can be interpreted as a positive description because it is absent in the other texts.

After the revolt, the description radically changes. In Bal'amī's text, Khusraw II describes Bahrām Čübīn as sly and deceitful after he becomes aware of the coins minted by Bahrām (BL II: 778). In Firdawsī, Bahrām Čübīn is called by many infamous names and in al-Ṭā'ālībī, Khusraw II calls Bahrām a dog and vile and impudent (*al-nadhl al-waqih*) (TB: 663–4, 676). Many details can be regarded as ridiculing Bahrām. One of these is the narrative motif of Khusraw II shooting an arrow at the horse of Bahrām Čübīn (V/g; see 3.3.2).

Negative comments are many and sometimes they are telling of the writer's biases. For instance, al-Ya'qūbī explicitly says that Bahrām was 'not of noble descent' (*laysa bi-l-nabīh*) (YQ: 188). Ibn al-Balkhī takes a stance on the legitimacy of Bahrām as a ruler when he tells us that Bahrām Čübīn and Šahrbarāz are not to be counted among the Sasanian kings because they were rebels (BK: 19). Al-Maqdīsī's versions of the rebellion casts Bahrām in a negative light and differs from other texts (see MQ III: 169; 3.2.11).

The above-cited examples are telling of the general structure of the story. In these two aspects, at least, the texts – otherwise so dissimilar – bear no difference: none of them praises Bahrām's achievements after the revolt and none of them explicitly approves Bahrām's legitimacy to power (3.5). In the context of the Bahrām Čübīn stories, Meisami's ideas on the literary topoi become helpful. She contrasts *dawla* (the state or dynasty) to the two concepts of *fitna*, or civil strife, and *fatra*, or a period of disorder. Furthermore, *dawla* conveys the meanings of political authority and established order, whereas *fatra* signifies incapacity to maintain order, administrative incompetence, and official disorder and *fitna* rebellion, treachery, and the machinations of heretics. In other words, the legitimacy of rule is a moral concept (Meisami, 1999: 281–2). The story of Bahrām Čübīn epitomizes this bipartite division. The Sasanian state represents the *dawla* and Bahrām's rebellion the *fitna*.

Bahrām Čübīn's character does not bend to any simple characterization. He is at once a national hero, praised by Hurmuzd IV, gifted and valiant general, a master archer, but also, a victim of Hurmuzd IV or his vizier's machination, an adventurer and rebellious usurper.

Part IV – Comparisons and conclusions

4.1. Hypothetical sources and connections

In the above textual analysis, we have seen that the accounts on Bahrām Čübīn are a combination of overlaps, similarities and discrepancies. Sections 4.1-4.14 aim to answer two questions: How are the texts linked? What sources did the fourteen Arabic and Persian texts use? I will engage in what could be called a forensic analysis and argue that the extant versions of Bahrām Čübīn stories are based on multiple Arabic translations: *K. Bahrām Šūbīn*, indicated by Ibn al-Nadīm, and the 'separate book' (*kitāb mufrad fī akhbār bahrām jūbīn*), mentioned by al-Mas'ūdī, are but two examples of them (see 1.2.1, 1.7).⁷¹

Some of the texts seem to be linked to one another and others not. The influences are often not straightforward and sometimes hidden. Some of the writers may have used several source texts or their sources were already a combination of several texts. According to previous studies, we know that al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*; al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Aṭīr; al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī; and Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī are connected. In the cases of al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* and al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Aṭīr, a clear textual connection is evident. Below we will discuss the connection of Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī and conclude that the story of Bahrām Čübīn affirms the link between them (see 4.8). Al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī, however, might be textually linked elsewhere but in the story of Bahrām Čübīn they stand in clear contrast to one another (see 4.10). The connection between Ibn Qutayba and al-Maḡdisī surfaced in this study and is discussed above (see 1.5). The two accounts are short and this connection requires no further discussion.

As I have perused the corpus several times thoroughly, I believe that all the important connections have appeared in the process. Below I will use the textual evidence of part III as well as the narrative motifs to affirm some connections and refute some others.

4.2. Narrative motifs and connections between texts

Based on the 104 narrative motifs and the connections between the texts, one can extrapolate two figures which indicate the level of similarity and difference (Appendix A). Between al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī, for instance, these figures are 39/104 and 65/104 indicating that al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī share 39 of the narrative motifs and disagree on 65 motifs (meaning that only one or neither of the two covers the motifs). To give another example, Firdawsī's and *Nihāyat*'s figures are 74/104 and 30/104 which suggest a higher similarity. These figures can be used as a tool to assess the connections

⁷¹ Hoyland makes an assumption that *K. Bahrām Šūbīn*, mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm, passed directly on from Jabala b. Sālim to al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī (Hoyland, 2018: 172). In the light of our study, suggesting only one line of transmission seems oversimplifying.

between texts. The chart below indicates the figures of similarity and difference for all pairs in the corpus. The number in the brackets indicates the number of narrative motifs covered by the text:

Chart 32.

	QT (13)	YQ (50)	DN (71)	ṬB (47)	MS (35)	BL (78)	MQ (12)	FD (97)	ṬB (62)	NH (87)	GD (18)	BKh (35)	MJ (24)
YQ (50)	13/104 91/104	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DN (71)	13/104 91/104	39/104 65/104	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ṬB (47)	13/104 91/104	33/104 71/104	39/104 65/104	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MS (35)	13/104 91/104	27/104 77/104	31/104 73/104	29/104 75/104	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BL (78)	13/104 91/104	44/104 60/104	59/104 45/104	39/104 65/104	34/104 70/104	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MQ (12)	8/104 96/104	10/104 94/104	12/104 92/104	12/104 92/104	12/104 92/104	12/104 92/104	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD (97)	13/104 91/104	49/104 55/104	66/104 38/104	44/104 60/104	35/104 69/104	76/104 28/104	12/104 92/104	-	-	-	-	-	-
ṬB (62)	12/104 92/104	34/104 70/104	44/104 60/104	38/104 66/104	29/104 75/104	46/104 58/104	11/104 93/104	61/104 43/104	-	-	-	-	-
NH (87)	13/104 91/104	49/104 55/104	67/104 37/104	42/104 62/104	34/104 70/104	75/104 29/104	12/104 92/104	74/104 30/104	51/104 53/104	-	-	-	-
GD (18)	9/104 95/104	12/104 92/104	16/104 88/104	15/104 89/104	16/104 88/104	16/104 88/104	9/104 95/104	17/104 87/104	17/104 87/104	16/104 88/104	-	-	-
BKh (35)	12/104 92/104	26/104 78/104	30/104 74/104	31/104 73/104	25/104 79/104	30/104 74/104	10/104 94/104	36/104 68/104	27/104 77/104	31/104 73/104	13/104 91/104	-	-
MJ (24)	10/104 94/104	19/104 85/104	22/104 82/104	19/104 85/104	19/104 85/104	24/104 80/104	9/104 95/104	24/104 80/104	18/104 86/104	24/104 80/104	10/104 94/104	16/104 88/104	-
AT (29)	10/104 94/104	21/104 83/104	25/104 79/104	29/104 75/104	21/104 83/104	26/104 78/104	9/104 95/104	29/104 75/104	25/104 79/104	27/104 77/104	12/104 92/104	22/104 82/104	15/104 89/104

The charts of matches based on the narrative motifs provide information on a general level. However, these figures are not a sufficient tool to draw definite conclusions about the connections between the texts: lexical and semantic contents and the inner structure of the narrative motifs must be analysed as well. This has been done above in part III. The table above will be used in what follows to corroborate the conclusions drawn. The table is especially important in the analysis of four early accounts in Arabic, namely al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas‘ūdī.

4.3. Al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, and al-Mas‘ūdī

I start with four early texts in Arabic, those of al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, and al-Mas‘ūdī for two reasons. First, as they are the earliest known Arabic sources that contain a full account of the Bahrām Čūbīn story,⁷² they are likely to contain material from the first translation(s) of the story.

⁷² Ibn Qutayba is excluded from this group for a significant reason: the text is very short, only one page, and it is clearly a shortened version of the Bahrām Čūbīn story. This argument is discussed in section 3.1.1 above.

Second, the group is distinct from five other Arabic texts of the corpus which can all be related to other known texts: Ibn Qutayba and al-Maḡdisī are linked (1.5), al-Ṭaʿālibī has a close affinity with Firdawsī (see 1.6.9, 4.8), *Nihāyat* is largely based on al-Dīnawarī's text (see 1.6.10) and Ibn al-Aṭīr has used heavily, but not solely, al-Ṭabarī. In the analysis, the chronological order is important as it excludes some lines of transmission.

In what follows, I analyse the four texts as a group based on the narrative motifs. Then I proceed to present each pair of the group separately. At first glance, the four accounts seem to differ considerably. I believe that this observation is shared by anyone who carefully reads the accounts. An impression is, however, only an impression. I will provide further evidence to argue that they cannot derive from the same source, i.e., one Arabic translation of the Pahlavi original(s). I cannot but refer to what Hoyland has claimed about the sources of the early Arabic versions of Bahrām Čūbīn stories:

Masʿūdi [...] says that “the Persians have a book devoted to the history of Bahram Chobin and his stratagems in the country of the Turks” and Ibn al-Nadīm [...] lists a “Book of Bahram Chobin” translated from Persian into Arabic by Jabala ibn Salīm [...]. The account of Yaʿqūbi on Bahram is so close to that of Dinawari and Tabari [...] that they certainly must all have been making use of such a text. (Hoyland, 2018: 20, n. 73)

In what follows, I argue quite the opposite. First, the versions of al-Dīnawarī, al-Yaʿqūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Masʿūdī are based on different sources; second, *K. Bahrām Šūbīn* and the ‘separate book’ are most probably different books.

4.3.1. Distinctive characters of the texts

The texts of al-Dīnawarī, al-Yaʿqūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Masʿūdī differ in many ways. It should also be noted that al-Dīnawarī, al-Yaʿqūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Masʿūdī never appear as a group without any other texts in the charts of narrative motifs. But when comparing the distribution of narrative motifs, they also resemble each other to some extent.

For instance, there are 23 narrative motifs out of 104 that appear in all four texts.⁷³ All of these narrative motifs are shared, however, by nine or more texts meaning that they are very common in the corpus (see chart 4, p. 83–4). Therefore, they do not yield any distinctive value. Conversely,

⁷³ I/b, I/c, I/d, II/c, II/e, II/f, III/c, IV/d, IV/o, IV/q, V/a, V/d, V/e, V/i, V/m, V/q, V/r, V/w, VI/a, VI/i, VI/k, VI/o and VII/q.

there are 15 narrative motifs that are missing in all four texts.⁷⁴ There are also 15 narrative motifs that appear in three of the four texts in different combinations.⁷⁵ Of course, there are narrative motifs which occur in two of the four texts. These are dealt with below in the analysis by pairs.

In addition to the above similarities, each text of the group has its own particularities in style, content and plot. Each text contains some unique details and narrative motifs. Chronologically, text by text, these distinctive characteristics are as follows.

4.3.1.1. Al-Dīnawarī (d. ca. 903)

There are only 21 narrative motifs found in al-Dīnawarī's text.⁷⁶ Eight of these are shared with the group Bal'amī-Firdawsī-Nihāyat.⁷⁷ Al-Dīnawarī, as well as al-Ya'qūbī, has an apparent connection with the group. Al-Dīnawarī provides considerable content towards the end of the story, notably in narrative blocks VI and VII. When compared with the corpus as a whole, one can note that al-Dīnawarī covers nine of the ten narrative motifs of narrative block VII whereas Firdawsī covers only seven, which is a significant difference because Firdawsī, as the longest version of all, is seldom outnumbered in narrative motifs by other versions.⁷⁸ To give another idea, narrative blocks VI and VII contain all in all 33 narrative motifs of which al-Dīnawarī covers 24 and Firdawsī 27.⁷⁹ Firdawsī covers more narrative motifs but taking into account that *Šāhnāma* is later and probably used many written sources (see 4.8, 4.9), the difference is quite small.

Other details that do not appear in al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī include the following: The age forty of Bahrām's men in the army (DN: 82); presenting arguments to Hurmuzd IV on choosing 12,000 men; mentioning Isfandiyār, Arjās, Siyāwuš, etc. (DN: 82) (see 3.1.6); Bahrām's men declaring that Hurmuzd IV was ungrateful towards them; mentioning Ardašīr and his vizier Yazdān (DN: 85); the story of Hurmuzd IV's vizier going to apologize to Bahrām (DN: 86–7); anti-Sasanian passages (DN: 105–9); insulting gifts from Hurmuzd IV to Bahrām (a shackle, women's clothes and a spindle) (DN: 85). The names al-Dīnawarī (DN: 81–4) and *Nihāyat* use for Khāqān II and Khāqān III are completely different not only with regard to the group al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī but in the corpus as a whole (see 3.2.1, 3.2.3).

⁷⁴ I/f, I/g, I/i, II/d, III/a, III/b, III/d, III/e, III/k, IV/f, V/o, VI/e, VI/h, VII/b and VII/e.

⁷⁵ III/f, IV/n, IV/p, V/f, V/h, V/j, V/n, V/s, V/t, VI/j, VII/a, VII/c, VII/m, VII/o and VII/p.

⁷⁶ III/i, IV/c, IV/e, IV/h, IV/i, IV/l, V/c, V/l, V/y, V/z, V/aa, VI/b, VI/c, VI/d, VI/l, VI/n, VII/d, VII/h, VII/j, VII/k and VII/l.

⁷⁷ III/i, IV/h, IV/i, V/l, V/aa, VI/b, VI/c and VII/h.

⁷⁸ Of these ten narrative motifs, al-Ya'qūbī covers five, al-Ṭabarī three and al-Mas'ūdī three.

⁷⁹ Of these 33 narrative motifs, al-Ya'qūbī covers 16, al-Ṭabarī 13 and al-Mas'ūdī 8.

Al-Dīnawarī's account is long and some of the nomenclature does not appear in the other three texts. These include the following: two generals in Bahrām's army called Mardān-Sīna al-Rūydaštī (DN: 89, 104, 106) and Yazd-Jušnas b. al-Ḥalabān (DN: 89), two generals in Khusraw II's army called Šarwīn b. Kāmjar and Bād b. Fayrūz (DN: 90), the son of Khusraw II's sister (DN: 93) (a character absent in all the other texts), Iyyās b. Qabīša from the tribe of Ṭayy (DN: 95), Khālid b. Jabalat al-Ghassānī (DN: 95), daughter of Bahrām Čūbīn's sister (DN: 95), Šīrzād b. al-Bihbūdhān (DN: 105), Turanian princes and chiefs who are called Ṭarākhana (DN: 84, 101, 105), brother of Bindūy called Mardān Bih Qahrimān (DN: 106), father of Bisṭām called Ibn Sābūr b. Khurbundād (DN: 107), Dārā b. Bahman Sīnḥalbūn (DN: 107), Khamānī, daughter of Bahman (DN: 108) and son of Gurdiya called Juwān Šīr b. Kisrā (DN: 114); and places such as the River Zāb (DN: 92), the River Yarmuk (DN: 95), al-Babr (DN: 107), al-Ṭaylasān (DN: 107), Šarrāh (DN: 108) and Qalūš (DN: 108). In addition to al-Dīnawarī, some of the names appear in *Nihāyat* only, some in other texts and some are completely unique in the corpus. One should not draw hasty conclusions based on one or two added names as they can be attributed to copyists' errors, extensions, rewriting, or slightly different manuscripts. However, in al-Dīnawarī's case, there is such a large number of different names, especially when compared with the versions of al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī, that the text seems to derive from a distinct source.

4.3.1.2. Al-Ya'qūbī (d. ca. 905)

Only the following eight narrative motifs are found in the text of al-Ya'qūbī: I/a, I/e, I/h, II/g, IV/a, IV/j, IV/k and V/v. Seven of these narrative motifs are shared with the group Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* and discussed in section 4.4. Al-Ya'qūbī seems to have an apparent connection with the group. One of the narrative motifs (IV/a) is shared with Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālībī only.

It is noteworthy that al-Ya'qūbī omits the narrative motif of Hurmuzd IV sending insulting gifts to Bahrām (IV/c) and mentions only Bahrām sending insulting gifts to Hurmuzd IV and Hurmuzd IV sending them back (IV/j, IV/k). This gives the impression that Bahrām started the exchange of insulting gifts, whereas according to the six other versions in the corpus it was Hurmuzd IV who first sent insulting items to Bahrām. Did al-Ya'qūbī leave out the first narrative motif (IV/c) consciously to give a negative image of Bahrām? We cannot be certain about this but al-Ya'qūbī is the only author in the corpus clearly denoting that Bahrām was not of noble descent (*laysa bi-l-nabīh*, YQ: 188) whereas many other texts underline his noble and sometimes royal origins. These two observations together give a tendentious impression to al-Ya'qūbī's text.

4.3.1.3. Al-Ṭabarī (d. 923)

Only the following four narrative motifs occur in al-Ṭabarī's text: II/b, IV/m, VI/p and VII/n. Three of these appear in Firdawsī and some other texts and one (VII/n) is shared with al-Ṭa'ālibī only which makes it an unusual narrative motif since this pair appears only once. Unlike al-Ya'qūbī and al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī has no apparent connection with the group Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* (4.4). However, Firdawsī might have used the text of al-Ṭabarī in some of his passages (4.9).

There are some details that do not appear in al-Dīnawarī and al-Ya'qūbī and al-Mas'ūdī: Āriš, Sūkhra and Bahrām's excellence in archery in the Persian kingdom (ṬB I: 992–3); Āriš as Bahrām Čūbīn's ancestor (ṬB I: 997); the sister of Ādhīn-Jušnas writing to Khusraw II (ṬB I: 995); Bahrām deeming that Khusraw II is more suited for the royal power than Hurmuzd IV. The reasons for Bahrām's revolt differ from many other texts as the insulting gifts and booty are completely absent. Instead, in al-Ṭabarī's text Bahrām and his soldiers are afraid of Hurmuzd IV's violence (*saṭwat hurmuz*) and for that reason renounce Hurmuzd IV's kingship. Some names are found in al-Ṭabarī's text only: Khuršīdhān (ṬB I: 998), Khusraw II's two generals called Sābūr b. 'Afriyān b. Farrukhzād and Farrukh-Hurmuz (ṬB I: 1000) and a plain called al-Danaq (ṬB I: 1000).

4.3.1.4. Al-Mas'ūdī (written in 956)

Al-Mas'ūdī has only two narrative motifs which are not found in al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī: III/h and VI/g. The first is shared by Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī and Gardīzī and the second with the group Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* (see 4.3). Other details absent in the other three texts are the following: Bahrām's origins are described as son of Jūbīn, son of Mīlād, from the lineage of Anūš known as al-Rām (MS I: 312); the size of Khāqān II's army is described as 400,000 men (MS I: 313), a number shared with Firdawsī and *Mujmal*; the name of Hurmuzd IV's vizier (*Arīkhsīs al-Khūzī*, *Arīkhsīs al-Khūrī*, *Artīhsīs*, MS I: 313) differs from other texts. Many of the places such as Būšanj (MS I: 312), al-Baylaqān (MS I: 314), Jabal al-Qabkh (MS I: 312), al-Rān (MS I: 314) and Qarmāsīn (MS I: 314) are not mentioned in al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī.

Al-Mas'ūdī dismisses most of the narrative motifs of Bahrām Čūbīn's defeat and death and the events after his death (narrative blocks VI and VII). Of the total of 31 narrative motifs in these two sections, al-Mas'ūdī presents only eight.⁸⁰ Al-Mas'ūdī also inserts poetry into the account of Bahrām

⁸⁰ VI/a, VI/g, VI/I, VI/k, VI/o, VII/m, VII/p and VII/q.

Čübīn (MS I: 315–16), and, for instance, mentions the paternal cousin of Khadīja bt. Khuwaylid, Waraqa b. Nawfal, reciting poetry (MS I: 316).

Now we shall proceed to analyse each pair of the group separately. I try to follow the same paradigm throughout the comparison. The figures of similarity and difference of the narrative motifs (4.2) are the basis for comparison. They provide a general idea of similarities and differences. Then, I proceed to a more detailed comparison of the pairs. First, I present those narrative motifs that are found exclusively in a given pair without the two other texts. This allows us to observe whether there are any similarities in wording or in content. Second, I eliminate those narrative motifs that are found in all four texts because they do not have any comparative value. Third, I present those motifs that appear in three of the four texts which have little comparative value but should be noted. Fourth, I indicate those narrative motifs that appear in connection with the Bal'amī-*Nihāyat*-Firdawsī group.

4.3.2. al-Dīnawarī and al-Ya'qūbī

According to our knowledge, al-Ya'qūbī's and al-Dīnawarī's texts are nearly contemporaneous. Both were composed at the end of the 9th century but are very different in length, content and structure. There are no similarities in wording and al-Dīnawarī's 29-page version of the Bahrām Čübīn narrative is considerably longer than al-Ya'qūbī's nine-page account. The figures of similarity and difference of the narrative motifs are 39/104⁸¹ and 65/104 while al-Ya'qūbī covers 50/104 narrative motifs in total and al-Dīnawarī 71/104.

As al-Ya'qūbī's text is shorter, it is interesting to search for the narrative motifs that are found only in al-Ya'qūbī's text and omitted in the text of al-Dīnawarī. These amount to eleven but if one removes those that are only found in al-Ya'qūbī's text within this group (see 4.3.1.2), the number reduces to three. Of these narrative motifs, one (III/f) appears in three texts of the four and two (VII/f, VII/g) occur with al-Ṭabarī only.

Correspondingly, there are 32 narrative motifs which appear in al-Dīnawarī's text but are not found in al-Ya'qūbī's account. If those narrative motifs that occur only in al-Dīnawarī's text (see

⁸¹ Al-Dīnawarī and Al-Ya'qūbī share the following narrative motifs: I/b, I/c, I/d, II/a, II/c, II/e, II/f, III/g, III/c, IV/d, IV/n, IV/o, IV/p, IV/q, V/a, V/d, V/e, V/i, V/m, V/p, V/q, V/r, V/s, V/t, V/w, VI/a, VI/f, VI/i, VI/j, VI/k, VI/m, VI/o, VII/a, VII/c, VII/i, VII/m, VII/o VII/p and VII/q.

4.3.1.1) are removed, the number is reduced to ten. Of these narrative motifs, four⁸² are found in three texts of the four, five⁸³ are shared with al-Ṭabarī and one (IV/b) with al-Mas'ūdī's version only.

There are six narrative motifs that appear only in the accounts of al-Dīnawarī and al-Ya'qūbī and are missing in al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī. In them no similarities in wording appear. On the contrary, there are many differences. For instance, according to al-Ya'qūbī, Bahrām arrives first in Herat after which Hurmuzd IV sends Hurmuzd-Jarābzīn to Khāqān II (YQ: 188) whereas in al-Dīnawarī's text the order is reversed (DN: 83) (II/a); al-Ya'qūbī mentions a fortress (*al-ḥiṣn*) before Khāqān III asks for asylum (YQ: 189) whereas in al-Dīnawarī's text the fortress is absent and the events occur in another location, near the city of Termes (*al-tirmidh*; DN: 84) (III/g); al-Ya'qūbī summarizes Maurice's discussion at his court about Khusraw II's situation (YQ: 191) whereas al-Dīnawarī presents a word-for-word speech (DN: 96) (V/p); the description of Bahrām killing Khāqān IV's first brother and the latter's name are very different in al-Dīnawarī and al-Ya'qūbī (DN: 102; YQ: 193) (VI/f); al-Ya'qūbī vaguely refers to Bahrām saying something on his deathbed (YQ: 194) whereas al-Dīnawarī describes Bahrām's last words (DN: 104) (VI/m); in the description of Gurdiya marrying Bisṭām there is no similarity in wording (YQ: 195; DN: 107) (VII/i).

There are some other differences in the two texts as well, for example, the names of Khāqān II and Khāqān III: Al-Ya'qūbī employs the name *Šāba* (YQ: 187–9) for Khāqān II which is part of the *Sāba-Šāba-Sāwa*-pattern followed by most of the texts (see 3.2.1) and al-Dīnawarī, along with *Nihāyat*, uses the generic designation *Šāhān-Šāh* ("king of kings") with some variations (DN: 81–4) which is unique in the corpus. As for Khāqān III, al-Ya'qūbī has the name *Barmūdha b. Šāba* (YQ: 189) whereas al-Dīnawarī employs the names *Yaltakīn*, *Yartakīn* and *Yartaqīn* (DN: 84) which, again, are shared with *Nihāyat*. The names for Khāqān II and Khāqān III are significant since the two name patterns cannot derive from the same source. For the same reason, al-Dīnawarī's text distinguishes itself not only from al-Ya'qūbī's text but from al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī as well because they all employ the *Sāba-Šāba-Sāwa* pattern for Khāqān II and the *Barmūda-Barmūdha* pattern for Khāqān III (see 3.2.1, 3.2.3). Another important observation is that al-Dīnawarī has clearly more material towards the end of the story (narrative blocks VI and VII) whereas al-Ya'qūbī provides some motifs (I/a, I/e, I/h, II/g) in the beginning of the story that do not appear in the other versions of the group. Al-Ya'qūbī's text covers more material in the beginning whereas al-Dīnawarī is stronger towards the end.

⁸² V/f, V/h, V/j and V/n.

⁸³ III/j, V/b, V/k, V/u and V/x.

Given the above observations, it is evident that al-Dīnawarī and al-Ya'qūbī are not linked. They share some core narrative motifs but differ in many more. If they were linked, directly or through intermediary sources, one would expect multiple similarities in wording and structure and other evidence. Most likely, the two texts reflect two different textual traditions stemming from two different Arabic adaptations of the Pahlavi original(s). The content of the two remains poles apart.

4.3.3. Al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī

Al-Dīnawarī's version of 29 pages on Bahrām Čūbīn is considerably longer than al-Ṭabarī's ten-page story. The figures of similarity and difference of the narrative motifs are 39/104⁸⁴ and 65/ 104 while al-Dīnawarī covers 71/104 narrative motifs and al-Ṭabarī 47/104.

When comparing the two texts, 31 narrative motifs appear in the text of al-Dīnawarī but are absent in al-Ṭabarī's text. If one removes those that are only found in al-Dīnawarī's text (see 4.3.1.1), the number of the narrative motifs is reduced to ten. Of these, two (VII/m, VII/p) are shared by three of the four texts, six⁸⁵ with al-Ya'qūbī and one (IV/b) with al-Mas'ūdī only. Six⁸⁶ of them appear in the group Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* (4.4).

There are eight narrative motifs that appear in the account of al-Ṭabarī but are not found in al-Dīnawarī's text. If one removes those that are only found in al-Ṭabarī's text (see 4.3.1.3), the number reduces to four. Of these narrative motifs, one (III/f) is shared with three of the four texts, two (VII/f, VII/g) with al-Ya'qūbī and one (IV/g) with al-Mas'ūdī only.

In addition to these differences, there are five narrative motifs that appear only in the accounts of al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī without al-Ya'qūbī and al-Mas'ūdī. The contents of these narrative motifs, however, do not resemble one another: In the account of al-Dīnawarī (DN: 84), Hurmuzd IV sends Bahrām Čūbīn a golden throne after his victory over Khāqān III whereas in al-Ṭabarī's version Hurmuzd IV only thanks him (ṬB I: 993) (III/j); according to al-Dīnawarī (DN: 88), Hurmuzd IV requests Khusraw II to avenge to those who toppled him whereas in al-Ṭabarī's account, Hurmuzd IV has two requests: that of revenge and the daily company of three cultivated men (ṬB I: 996) (V/b); al-Dīnawarī (DN: 94–5) presents a one-and-a-half page description of Bindūy's and Bahrām Siyāwuš's planning and attempting to assassinate Bahrām Čūbīn whereas al-Ṭabarī only mentions the two

⁸⁴ Al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī share the following narrative motifs: I/b, I/c, I/d, II/c, II/e, II/f, III/c, III/j, IV/d, IV/o, IV/p, IV/q, V/a, V/b, V/d, V/e, V/f, V/h, V/i, V/j, V/k, V/m, V/n, V/q, V/r, V/s, V/t, V/u, V/w, V/x, VI/a, VI/i, VI/j, VI/k, VI/o, VII/a, VII/c, VII/o and VII/q.

⁸⁵ II/a, III/g, V/p, VI/f, VI/m and VII/i.

⁸⁶ II/a, III/g V/p, VI/f, VI/m and VII/i.

names and their plan (ṬB I: 999) (V/k). In the narrative motifs of John Mystacon helping Khusraw II (V/u) and Khusraw II's miraculous escape (V/x) there is no similarity in wording.

However, there are some rare similarities between al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī. Both affirm that 11 years of Hurmuzd IV's reign had passed when the external forces attacked his kingdom. In this context, the texts employ almost identical phrases: Al-Dīnawarī's wording is *ḥadaqa bi-hi al-a'dā' min kull wajh fa-ktanafū iktināf al-watar siyatay al-qaws* (DN: 81) whereas al-Ṭabarī writes *qad iktināf bilād al-furs al-a'dā' min kull wajh ka-ktanafū iktināf al-watar siyatay al-qaws* (ṬB I: 991). The situation is similar to that of al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī (below 4.3.5) who also share nearly identical phrases. There are two possibilities to discuss:

1. Al-Ṭabarī used the text of al-Dīnawarī directly;
2. The texts are linked through intermediary source(s).

Even though al-Ṭabarī's *al-Ta'rīkh* was composed later, it cannot depend solely on al-Dīnawarī. First, there are 7 narrative motifs that appear only in al-Ṭabarī and therefore al-Dīnawarī could possibly be (but is not) only one of al-Ṭabarī's sources. Second, al-Ṭabarī does not indicate al-Dīnawarī as his source regarding Bahrām Čübīn stories or elsewhere nor does the scholarly literature. A direct link is therefore excluded. It is important to note that, despite this nearly identical phrasing, in many other respects al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī do not resemble each other at all. For instance, the association of Āriš the archer with Bahrām Čübīn clearly distinguishes al-Ṭabarī from the account of al-Dīnawarī (see 3.1.4). In al-Ṭabarī's text, Āriš is associated with Bahrām's Arsacid origins (ṬB I: 992–3) whereas in al-Dīnawarī's text, Āriš is associated with Bindūy's bravery and sacrifice when he is chased by Bahrām Čübīn's troops (DN: 92). This motif, among many other things including the general discrepancy in content, is radically different and indicates that al-Ṭabarī cannot be solely dependent on al-Dīnawarī: they must have had other sources too.

Therefore, I argue that the two texts have one common intermediary source which explains this exceedingly similar phrase. However, as the phrase is really the only connecting passage, al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī must otherwise be based on different sources, i.e., different Arabic adaptations of the Pahlavi original(s). The two texts represent for the most part independent lines of transmission. This point is further explained below in section 4.3.8.

4.3.4. Al-Dīnawarī and al-Mas'ūdī

Al-Dīnawarī's 29-page story on Bahrām Čübīn is considerably longer than al-Mas'ūdī's seven-page account. The figures of similarity and difference of the narrative motifs are 31/104⁸⁷ and 73/104 while al-Dīnawarī covers 71/104 narrative motifs in total and al-Mas'ūdī only 35/104.

When comparing the two texts, 40 narrative motifs appear in al-Dīnawarī's text that are missing in al-Mas'ūdī. If one removes the narrative motifs that appear in al-Dīnawarī's text only (see 4.3.1.1), the number is reduced to 18. Of these, seven⁸⁸ are shared with three of the four texts, five⁸⁹ with al-Ya'qūbī and six⁹⁰ with al-Ṭabarī only. Four of them⁹¹ appear in the group Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* (4.4).

Correspondingly, there are four narrative motifs that appear in al-Mas'ūdī's text but are missing in al-Dīnawarī. If one removes those that appear in al-Mas'ūdī's text only (see 4.3.1.4), the number is reduced to two. Of these narrative motifs, one (III/f) is shared by three of the four texts and one (IV/g) with al-Ṭabarī only.

There is one narrative motif that appears only in the accounts of al-Dīnawarī and al-Mas'ūdī without al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī. That is Hurmuzd IV's vizier's denouncing sentence (see 3.2.6) followed by the vizier's intriguing against Bahrām Čübīn (IV/b), which is the only episode that is remotely similar in the two accounts. The idea, not the wording, is to some extent similar. Both share the core idea of "something being greater than these morsels" which suggests the same underlying motif: al-Dīnawarī employs the phrase *mā kāna a'ḡam al-mā'idat allatī minhā hādhihi al-luqmat* (DN: 85) whereas al-Mas'ūdī's sentence is the following: *a'ḡam li-faras hādhihi zillat* (MS I: 313). However, the connection is weak. It should be pointed out, that al-Mas'ūdī's phrase is very similar to that of al-Ṭa'libī (*a'ḡam bi-'uras hādhihi zillatu-hu* (TB: 657). Regarding this detail, the link between al-Mas'ūdī and al-Ṭa'libī seems to be much stronger than that between al-Mas'ūdī and al-Dīnawarī.

In summing up, we may note that despite some shared narrative motifs, the link between al-Dīnawarī and al-Mas'ūdī is weak. Most likely the two texts represent two different textual traditions. As a general note, al-Mas'ūdī yields very few common motifs with the other texts.

⁸⁷ Al-Dīnawarī and al-Mas'ūdī share the following narrative motifs: I/b, I/c, I/d, II/c, II/e, II/f, III/c, IV/b, IV/d, IV/n, IV/o, IV/q, V/a, V/d, V/e, V/f, V/h, V/i, V/j, V/m, V/n, V/q, V/r, V/w, VI/a, VI/i, VI/k, VII/m, VI/o, VII/p and VII/q.

⁸⁸ IV/p, V/s, V/t, VI/j, VII/a, VII/c and VII/o.

⁸⁹ II/a, III/g, V/p, VI/m and VII/i.

⁹⁰ III/j, V/b, V/k, V/u, V/x and VI/f.

⁹¹ II/a, V/p, VI/m and VII/i.

4.3.5. Al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī

Al-Ya'qūbī's nine-page version and al-Ṭabarī's ten-page account are almost equal in length. The figures of similarity and difference of the narrative motifs are 33/104⁹² and 71/104 while al-Ya'qūbī covers 50/104 narrative motifs in total and al-Ṭabarī 47/104.

When comparing the two texts, there are 17 narrative motifs that appear in al-Ya'qūbī's text but are not found in al-Ṭabarī's text. If one removes those that are found in al-Ya'qūbī's text only (see 4.3.1.2), the number reduces to nine. Of these narrative motifs, three (IV/n, VII/m, VII/p) are shared by three of the four texts, six⁹³ with al-Dīnawarī only, which are the same six narrative motifs that appear in the group Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* (4.4).

Correspondingly, 14 narrative motifs appear in al-Ṭabarī's text but are not found in al-Ya'qūbī. If one removes those that are only found in al-Ṭabarī's text (see 4.3.1.3), the number of the motifs reduces to ten. Of these, four⁹⁴ are found in three of the four texts, five⁹⁵ are shared with al-Dīnawarī and one (IV/g) with al-Mas'ūdī only.

In addition to these differences, there are only two narrative motifs that appear in the accounts of al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī without al-Dīnawarī and al-Mas'ūdī. These are Khāqān IV's second brother proposing to Gurdiya and Gurdiya killing the man (YQ: 194, ṬB I: 1001) (VII/f, VII/g).⁹⁶ In both texts, the brother of Khāqān IV is called Naṭrā, but if one dismisses the name, there are no similar phrases or verbatim expressions. In al-Ya'qūbī the brother writes directly to Gurdiya whereas in al-Ṭabarī, Khāqān IV writes to Gurdiya on behalf of his brother. In al-Ya'qūbī, Gurdiya speaks to the brother whereas in al-Ṭabarī this detail does not exist at all. In al-Ṭabarī, the brother pursues Gurdiya with a troop of 12,000 men whereas al-Ya'qūbī does not mention this. Here one could plausibly suggest that the two texts are connected by intermediary sources and that rewriting and editing could produce the differences.

Al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī have other similarities too. For instance, the coverage of the narrative motifs in narrative blocks VI and VII is remarkably similar. In these two sections al-Ya'qūbī covers 16

⁹² Al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī share the following narrative motifs: I/b, I/c, I/d, II/c, II/e, II/f, III/c, III/f, IV/d, IV/o, IV/p, IV/q, V/a, V/d, V/e, V/i, V/m, V/q, V/r, V/s, V/t, V/w, VI/a, VI/i, VI/j, VI/k, VI/o, VII/a, VII/c, VII/f, VII/g, VII/o and VII/q.

⁹³ II/a, III/g, V/p, VI/f, VI/m and VII/i.

⁹⁴ V/f, V/h, V/j and V/n.

⁹⁵ III/j, V/b, V/k, V/u and V/x.

⁹⁶ These narrative motifs are interesting because in addition to al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī the first (VII/f) is shared by al-Ṭa'ālibī and *Nihāyat* and the second (VII/g) by Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī and *Nihāyat*. First, it is rare that Firdawsī misses a narrative motif which is the case in VII/f. Second, in both narrative motifs *Nihāyat* appears without al-Dīnawarī which is rare and indicates that in addition to al-Dīnawarī, *Nihāyat* must have received material from other sources too. Third, the combination al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, al-Ṭa'ālibī and *Nihāyat* in VII/f is unique in the corpus.

and al-Ṭabarī 12 motifs and the two texts share 11 motifs.⁹⁷ Motifs VII/f and VII/g especially catch the eye because they are absent in the accounts of al-Dīnawarī and al-Mas'ūdī. In addition, another similarity can be found in wording. In the early part of the story, al-Ya'qūbī employs the phrase *tumma ijtarā'ū a'ādī-hi 'alay-hi wa-ghazzū bilāda-hu* (YQ: 187), whereas al-Ṭabarī has the almost identical phrase *wa-jtara'a a'dā'a-hu 'alay-hi wa-ghazzū bilāda-hu* (ṬB I: 991). These are the only similarities in wording. Similarities of this kind on a phrasal level are very rare in the corpus and therefore important to note. There are two possibilities to discuss:

1. Al-Ṭabarī used the text of al-Ya'qūbī directly.
2. They are linked through intermediary source(s).

Here I suggest following the same line of thought as with al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī above: Al-Ṭabarī cannot depend solely on al-Ya'qūbī because there are 17 narrative motifs that appear only in al-Ṭabarī. Therefore, al-Ya'qūbī could possibly be (but is not) only one of al-Ṭabarī's sources. As far as I know, reaserch literature has not brought up any other links between al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī. Therefore, a direct dependency is possible but unlikely: if al-Ṭabarī had used al-Ya'qūbī's text directly, there would be significantly more similarities in wording, content and structure (similar to those found in the texts of *Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl* and *Nihāyat*, for instance).

In addition, there are some other similarities. Al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī are the only two texts⁹⁸ that do not identify *Ādhīn-Jušnas* as Hurmuzd IV's vizier even though he occupies the same narrative function as the vizier in other versions (YQ: 190; ṬB I: 995). Instead of sending him to apologize to Bahrām, Hurmuzd IV sends the man to fight Bahrām Čübīn (see 3.2.5, 3.2.10). Another important motif connecting the two is the fact that they omit Hurmuzd IV's sending insulting gifts to Bahrām, an important motif in other texts. Both al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī mention Naṭrā as the name of Khāqān IV's brother (YQ: 194; ṬB I: 1001). These details combined, al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī seem to have the strongest link in the group of four early Arabic versions.

Compared to other texts that are known to be linked (*Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl* and *Nihāyat* or even Bal'amī and *Nihāyat*), the number of connecting details is not very high. At first reading, the two seem to have very little in common. I argue that al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī have at least one common intermediary source that explains the common passage and other common content. However,

⁹⁷ The shared motifs are the following: VI/a, VI/i, VI/j, VI/k, VI/o, VII/a, VII/c, VII/f, VII/g, VII/o and VII/q.

⁹⁸ In addition to Ibn Balkhī (BK: 99), which is not part of the analysis here.

despite the rare similarities in content, al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī must be, for the most part, based on different Arabic adaptations of the Pahlavi original(s) and represent independent lines of transmission. To suggest another explanation would imply many more verbatim or quasi-identical phrases or, alternatively, massive rewriting and editing. This point is further explained below in the conclusions (4.3.8).

4.3.6. Al-Ya'qūbī and al-Mas'ūdī

Al-Ya'qūbī's nine-page account is slightly longer than al-Mas'ūdī's seven-page story. The figures of similarity and difference of the narrative motifs are 27/104⁹⁹ and 77/ 104 while al-Ya'qūbī covers 50/104 narrative motifs in total and al-Mas'ūdī 35/104. There are no connecting narrative motifs that appear only in the duo of al-Ya'qūbī and al-Mas'ūdī without al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī.

When the two texts are compared, 23 narrative motifs appear in al-Ya'qūbī's text that are not found in al-Mas'ūdī's text. If one removes those narrative motifs that occur exclusively in al-Ya'qūbī's text (see 4.3.1.2), the number of the motifs reduces to 15. Of these narrative motifs seven¹⁰⁰ are shared by three of the four texts, six¹⁰¹ with al-Dīnawarī and two (VII/f, VII/g) with al-Ṭabarī only. Six¹⁰² of them appear in the group Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* (see 4.4).

There are seven narrative motifs that are found in al-Mas'ūdī's *Murūj* that do not appear in al-Ya'qūbī. If one removes those that are found in al-Mas'ūdī's text only (see 4.3.1.4), the number reduces to five. Of these, three (V/f, V/h, V/j) are shared by three of the four texts, one (IV/b) with al-Dīnawarī and one (IV/g) with al-Ṭabarī only.

There are no passages similar in wording, but al-Ya'qūbī (YQ: 191) and al-Mas'ūdī (MS I: 316), along with *Nihāyat* (NH: 372), mention the city of Edessa (*al-Ruhā*) as a place where Khusraw II halts before meeting Maurice, king of the Byzantines (see 3.3.1). This episode connects the three as it is not found in other texts. Nowhere else in the corpus does a connection between al-Ya'qūbī, al-Mas'ūdī and *Nihāyat* appear. Perhaps this group that emerges only once is telling of the general nature of the corpus: Bahrām Čūbīn's story is rewritten over and over again; it is like a palimpsest and bears connections that surface unexpectedly here and there. This is a small but revealing detail

⁹⁹ Al-Ya'qūbī and al-Mas'ūdī share the following narrative motifs: I/b, I/c, I/d, II/c, II/e, II/f, III/c, III/f, IV/d, IV/n, IV/o, IV/q, V/a, V/d, V/e, V/i, V/m, V/q, V/r, V/w, VI/a, VI/i, VI/k, VI/o, VII/m, VII/p and VII/q.

¹⁰⁰ IV/p, V/s, V/t, VI/j, VII/a, VII/c and VII/o.

¹⁰¹ II/a, III/g, V/p, VI/f, VI/m and VII/i.

¹⁰² II/a, III/g, V/p, VI/f, VI/m and VII/i.

illustrating the complex and often untraceable connections between the texts. Probably many Arabic translations circulated as well.

Given the above evidence, it seems clear that al-Ya'qūbī and al-Mas'ūdī are not linked directly or through intermediary sources. They reflect two different Arabic adaptations of the Pahlavi original(s).

4.3.7. Al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī

Al-Ṭabarī's ten-page story is slightly longer than al-Mas'ūdī's version of seven pages. The figures of similarity and difference of the narrative motifs are 29/104¹⁰³ of and 75/104 while al-Ṭabarī covers 47/104 narrative motifs and al-Mas'ūdī 35/104.

When comparing the two texts, there are 17 narrative motifs that appear in al-Ṭabarī but are absent in al-Mas'ūdī's text. If one removes those that are found in al-Ṭabarī's text only (see 4.3.1.3), the number reduces to 13. Five of these¹⁰⁴ are shared with three of the four, five narrative motifs¹⁰⁵ with al-Dīnawarī and one (VII/f) with al-Ya'qūbī only.

Correspondingly, six narrative motifs appear in al-Mas'ūdī's text but are absent in al-Ṭabarī. If one removes those that appear in al-Mas'ūdī's text only (see 4.3.1.4), the number of the motifs reduces to four. Three of these narrative motifs (IV/n, VII/m, VII/p) are shared by three of the four texts and one (IV/b) with al-Dīnawarī only.

There is only one narrative motif (IV/g) that appears in the accounts of al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī without al-Ya'qūbī and al-Dīnawarī. However, the content and wording are considerably different. In al-Ṭabarī's version, Bahrām ascends the throne and has discussions with the members of the court, all the prominent men of which are averse to him (ṬB I: 999). In al-Mas'ūdī's text, instead, Bahrām simply assumes the royal functions (*iḥṭawā al-mulk*) without any disagreeing moral message (MS I: 316).

There are not many notable similarities between the two texts. The number of the Byzantine troops attacking Iran is 80,000 in al-Ṭabarī (ṬB I: 991) and al-Mas'ūdī (MS I: 312). In the episode where the two Arabs attack Iran, the name of the first man, 'Abbās al-Aḥwal, is the same in the two texts whereas both texts mention the second man with a slightly different name (ṬB I: 991; MS I: 312; see 3.1.1). Despite these common details, the link between al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī is weak:

¹⁰³ Al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī share the following narrative motifs: I/b, I/c, I/d, II/c, II/e, II/f, III/c, III/f, IV/d, IV/g, IV/o, IV/q, V/a, V/d, V/e, V/f, V/h, V/i, V/j, V/m, V/n, V/q, V/r, V/w, VI/a, VI/i, VI/k, VI/o and VII/q.

¹⁰⁴ V/s, V/t, VI/j, VII/a and VII/c.

¹⁰⁵ III/j, V/b, V/k, V/u and V/x.

one similar number and name can be a mere coincidence, reflect some remote similarity in Pahlavi original(s) or Arabic adaptations or even oral sources. Had there been a longer identical or quasi-similar phrase, the connection would be more compelling. Given the massive discrepancies elsewhere in the texts and regardless of the fact that al-Mas'ūdī mentions al-Ṭabarī as one of his sources (MS I: 15), as regards the Bahrām Čübīn story, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī cannot be directly linked and must be based on two different lines of transmission.

4.3.8. Conclusions

To sum up, in the quartet of al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī, similarities are few but differences loom large. Especially few are the similarities in wording, that is, verbatim or quasi-identical phrases and expressions. Above we have pointed out the following:

al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī

Common passages, details, names	
DN	<i>ḥadaqa bi-hi al-a'dā' min kull wajh fa-ktanafū iktināf al-watar siyatay al-qaws</i> (DN: 81)
ṬB	<i>qad iktināf bilād al-furs al-a'dā' min kull wajh ka-ktanafū iktināf al-watar siyatay al-qaws</i> (ṬB I: 991).

al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī

Common passages, details, names	
YQ	<i>tumma ijtara'ū a'ādī-hi 'alay-hi wa-ghazzū bilāda-hu</i> (YQ: 187)
ṬB	<i>wa-jtara'a a'dā'a-hu 'alay-hi wa-ghazzū bilāda-hu</i> (ṬB I: 991)
YQ	<i>Ādhīn-Jušnas</i> (YQ: 190)
ṬB	<i>Ādhīn-Jušnas</i> (ṬB I: 995)
YQ	<i>Naṭrā</i> (YQ: 194).
ṬB	<i>Naṭrā</i> (ṬB I: 1001).

al-Ya'qūbī and al-Mas'ūdī (with *Nihāyat*)

Common passages, details, names	
YQ	city of Edessa (<i>al-Ruhā</i>) (YQ: 191)
MS	city of Edessa (<i>al-Ruhā</i>) (MS I: 316)

al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī

Common passages, details, names	
ṬB	80,000 (Byzantine troops attacking Iran) (ṬB I: 991)
MS	80,000 (Byzantine troops attacking Iran) (MS I: 312)
ṬB	'Abbās al-Aḥwal (ṬB I: 991)
MS	'Abbās al-Aḥwal (MS I: 312)

The two quasi-identical phrases show that there must be one common intermediary source between al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭabarī and another between al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī. The few common names and numbers form less compelling evidence and can be a mere coincidence. Had the number of connecting details been higher, say, dozens between al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī, the picture would be different. These sporadic details possibly reflect remote earlier sources and the pool of common content of the corpus.

The question arises: If two texts provide connecting passages, how can one assess the degree of similarity or dependency? There is no accurate tool for assessing this but one can compare with texts that are known to be connected such as al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*; al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Aṭīr; Ibn Qutayba and al-Maqdisī; Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī; and Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* (see 4.5). In the first three pairs (all in Arabic), the connection is affirmed by multiple verbatim passages and nomenclature. In the duos Firdawsī–al-Ṭa'ālibī and Bal'amī–*Nihāyat* a common source or sources can clearly be seen in nomenclature, plot development, underlying structure and numerous other details. By all measures, the few similarities in wording and content found in the group al-Dīnawarī–al-Ya'qūbī–al-Ṭabarī–al-Mas'ūdī fall far behind in frequency and number of similarities found in the above-mentioned pairs. In other words, the connections in the quartet, regardless of the few similar passages, are very weak. Most likely the four texts are largely based on different Arabic adaptations of the Pahlavi original(s).

How then does one explain the connecting passages? Ultimately, the texts derive from the same sources: Middle Persian texts on Bahrām Čūbīn. In light of the sporadic evidence on early Pahlavi literature, for instance, the eschatological and apocalyptic literature where Bahrām Čūbīn appears (see 1.3.4, 3.5.9, 4.15), it is reasonable to suggest that there were many versions of Bahrām Čūbīn stories in Middle Persian. By themes and content, these texts were not completely unrelated, yet they differed in details. The texts probably held different views on Bahrām Čūbīn, his legitimacy as ruler, the beginning of the revolt, and other turning points in the story. When these versions were later translated into Arabic, the differences remained within them. This does not, however, exclude

shared content to some degree and some verbatim or quasi-identical passages, names and shared narrative elements. As already mentioned, the quartet shares 23 narrative motifs out of 104 (about 22% of the content). But these narrative motifs are very common, meaning that they are often shared by all or nearly all the texts in the corpus (see 4.3.1; chart 4, pp. 83–4). To give an example, Bahrām makes war against Khāqān II (II/e, shared by twelve texts), Bahrām makes war against Khāqān III (III/c, shared by ten texts) and Bahrām revolts against Hurmuzd IV (IV/d, shared by fourteen texts) yield very different content as we have seen above in section 3.2. Here it is important to note that common narrative motifs can, in reality, differ in content considerably.

One could, of course, try to explain the differences by heavy rewriting and editing and claim that in any case the four texts derive from the same source. For instance, one could insist that the three verbatim or quasi-identical details in al-Ya‘qūbī and al-Ṭabarī can be explained by a common source: both authors would then have extensively reworked the text to the extent that only a few shared details would stand out. This argument, however, becomes problematic when there are very few connecting details. What about al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas‘ūdī (two connecting words) or al-Ya‘qūbī and al-Mas‘ūdī (one connecting name)? Is it possible to explain the divergent content, which forms the majority of the texts anyway, by extensive editing? It would, indeed, be implausible. Instead, it appears more reasonable to assume that the four texts derive, for the most part, from different textual traditions. Trying to close the wide gap by uncertain speculations and wavering reconstructions is doomed to failure.

Another argument against the idea of a common source for all is of a practical nature. There is no evidence that Bahrām Čūbīn as a character was more significant to the authors than any other figure of the Iranian national history, say, Gayūmart, Bahrām Gūr or Khusraw II. Why then would they have wasted an excessive amount of ink to rewrite the story almost completely, add nomenclature, other details and change the plot? I do not see any reason why. Therefore, I argue that the majority of the content in the versions of al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas‘ūdī derives from the sources they used, not from their creative minds. Small scale additions, omissions and editing certainly occurred but that is very different from rewriting the story from the beginning to the end.

In many versions, abridgements have taken place. Of the four texts, al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas‘ūdī show signs of abridgment. Only al-Dīnawarī, the longest and earliest account in the group, gives the impression of a continuous and non-abridged narrative. The story includes dialogues, long descriptive passages and rich nomenclature. Altheim claims that al-Dīnawarī’s version represents

the oldest and fullest Arabic translation of the Bahrām Čübīn stories (1958: 134). The argument, however, is presented without qualifications and, in my view, based on insufficient understanding of parallel versions. Al-Dīnawarī's story can be the fullest, which becomes evident by looking at the sheer length and rich nomenclature of the text (see 1.5), but, manifestly, it reflects only one of the Arabic adaptations of the Middle Persian original(s). Again, I do not see any reason why al-Dīnawarī would have created a story three times as long as the versions of al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī and four times as long as al-Mas'ūdī's version and add twice as many characters and places as in other versions.¹⁰⁶ The source(s) used by al-Dīnawarī must have been longer in the beginning and contained richer nomenclature than the sources used by al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī. Yet the sources of the latter three must be radically different.

Al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭabarī, instead, are clearly abridged here and there: some of the themes that are fully developed in other texts are simply alluded to in them.¹⁰⁷ Al-Mas'ūdī covers the story of Bahrām Čübīn patchily and, compared to other texts, al-Mas'ūdī distinguishes itself by sharing very few narrative motifs with other texts. Because the underlying structure and overall content are different, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī cannot be simply abbreviated versions of al-Dīnawarī's text. Each of them must be largely derived from a different source.

What is more, al-Mas'ūdī's text reveals that the author has used at least two sources: al-Mas'ūdī's primary source and *K. Mufrad* or the 'separate book containing the stories of Bahrām Čübīn'. This becomes evident by the summarized content described by al-Mas'ūdī: Bahrām's ruses in the land of the Turanians, rescuing Khātūn II's daughter carried away by a beast, etc. As al-Mas'ūdī only rephrases the book after his main account and as he does not elaborate the content he refers to (unlike Bal'amī, Firdawsī, *Nihāyat* and others; see below 4.4), it becomes evident that he did not use the 'separate book' as his source. He might have seen the book, heard about it or read it but he did not use it for his version of the Bahrām Čübīn story.

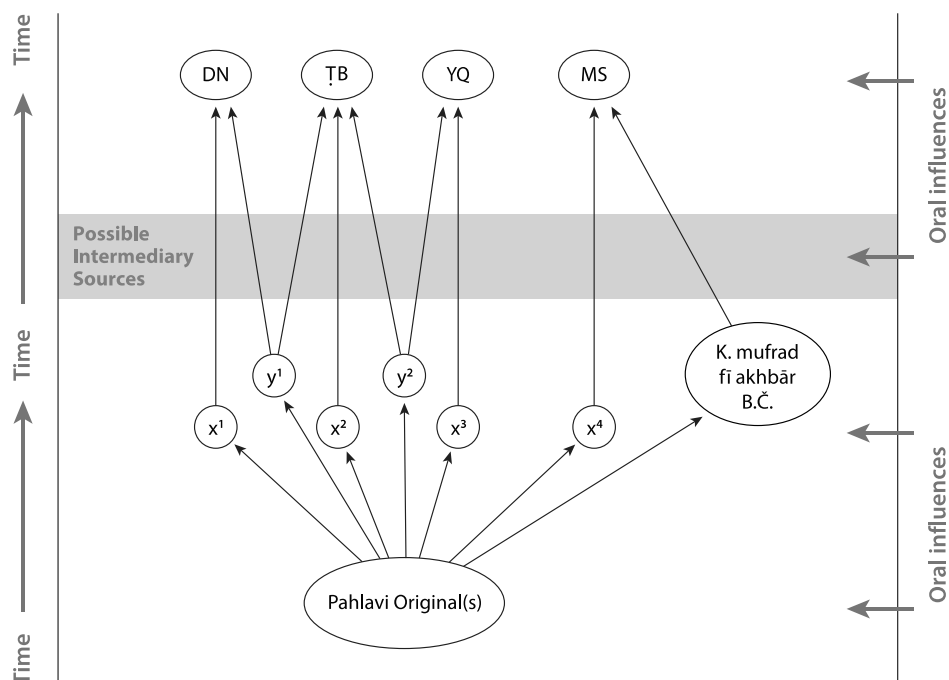
Figure 1 shows in visual form that behind the versions of al-Ya'qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī lie at least seven different Arabic adaptations of the Bahrām Čübīn stories. In addition,

¹⁰⁶ Al-Ya'qūbī mentions 30 persons' names whereas al-Dīnawarī 65, al-Ṭabarī 39 and al-Mas'ūdī 35. Al-Ya'qūbī mentions 10 names of places whereas al-Dīnawarī 44, al-Ṭabarī 21 and al-Mas'ūdī 26. See chart 1, p. 34.

¹⁰⁷ In al-Ya'qūbī's account, the abridgments can be seen, e.g., in the narrative motifs of Mihrān-Sitād telling the anecdote (I/a), Bahrām captures a Turanian magician (II/g), Bahrām sends insulting gifts to Hurmuzd IV and Hurmuzd IV sending the gifts back (IV/j, IV/k). In al-Ṭabarī's version, the following narrative motifs, among many others, are presented in a compressed form: A Turanian man kills Bahrām (VI/k), Gurdiya *de facto* leads the former army of Bahrām Čübīn (VI/o) and Gurdiya rebukes Bahrām for his actions (VI/p).

oral influences and unknown intermediary sources might have influenced the written texts we possess today:

Fig. 1.



The seven sources can reasonably be suggested, but the four texts may have had other sources as well. Oral influences may also have been involved. We may add that one of the unknown Arabic adaptations might be *K. Bahrām Šūbīn*, mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm in his *Fihrist* (1872: 305). It is impossible to rule out any of the candidates because we do not have a description of the content, only a name.

4.4. The Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* trio

In the analysis, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, and *Nihāyat* often appear as a group. This is an important point and should be analysed carefully. All three accounts are long: Bal'amī has 54 pages and covers

78/104 narrative motifs, Firdawsī has 374 pages and covers 97/104 narrative motifs and *Nihāyat* has 46 pages and covers 87/104 narrative motifs. The figures of similarity and difference for the pairs are: Bal'amī and Firdawsī 76/104 and 28/104, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* 75/104 and 29/104, and Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* 74/104 and 30/104. The number of narrative motifs shared by all three texts is 72/104.¹⁰⁸ In this context, again, al-Mas'ūdī's description of the 'separate book' becomes relevant. It provides us with one key denominator that links the three texts:

The Persians have a separate book (*kitāb mufrad*) for the stories of Bahrām Jūbīn (*fī 'akhbār bahrām jūbīn*), which relates [the stories of] his ruses (*makāyidi-hi*) in the land of the Turanians. [For instance], Bahrām saving the king of the Turans' daughter from the clutches of a monster called *al-Sim'*, who was like a huge goat. [The monster] carried her away from among her maidens and lifted her up (*'alā bi-hā*) [when] she had gone out in some pleasurable places. [The book also explains] the beginning [of Bahrām's story] until his death and his lineage (MS: 318).

The key element here is the description of the monster and the kidnapping of Khātūn II's daughter. Al-Mas'ūdī alludes to it, but only Bal'amī (BL: 804, 1015), Firdawsī (FD VIII: 176–84) and *Nihāyat* (NH: 385–6) provide us with a detailed account of the episode (see 3.4.2). A question follows: Do the three texts contain other episodes of the 'separate book' as well? To answer that question, we should define the content found exclusively in the three texts.

It appears that a significant amount of material is shared. In addition to the narrative motif of Bahrām fighting the monster (VI/g), the narrative motifs of Bahrām having a dream before the fight against Khāqān II (II/d), hunting wild ass (IV/f) and the prophecy of a Christian monk (V/o) occur exclusively in the three texts. Other details connecting the three include: the number of Byzantine troops as 100,000;¹⁰⁹ the reason why Bahrām chose quadragenarians;¹¹⁰ Khusraw II hunting without success before meeting some generous Arabs;¹¹¹ and the city of Balkh in relation to Bahrām's battle against Khāqān III.¹¹² As such, this might not seem like much, but if we extend the scope to include those narrative motifs that contain one or two other texts in addition to Bal'amī, *Nihāyat* and Firdawsī the results become very interesting.

¹⁰⁸ I/a, I/b, I/c, I/d, I/e, I/f, I/g, I/h, I/i, II/a, II/c, II/d, II/e, II/f, II/g, III/a, III/c, III/f, III/g, III/i, IV/b, IV/c, IV/d, IV/f, IV/g, IV/h, IV/i, IV/j, IV/k, IV/n, IV/o, IV/p, IV/q, V/a, V/b, V/d, V/e, V/f, V/g, V/h, V/i, V/j, V/k, V/l, V/m, V/n, V/o, V/p, V/q, V/r, V/s, V/t, V/u, V/v, V/w, V/x, V/aa, VI/a, VI/b, VI/c, VI/f, VI/g, VI/i, VI/j, VI/k, VI/o, VII/c, VII/h, VII/i, VII/m, VII/p and VII/q.

¹⁰⁹ BL II: 760, FD VII: 488, NH: 350.

¹¹⁰ BL II: 767, FD VII: 505–6, NH: 353.

¹¹¹ BL II: 791, FD VIII: 75, NH: 371.

¹¹² BL II: 772, FD VII: 551–2, NH: 357–8.

There are 14 narrative motifs that appear in addition in one other text: Hurmuzd IV discusses with his vizier about Bahrām's trustworthiness (I/e; plus al-Ya'qūbī), Hurmuzd IV sends a man after Bahrām (I/f; plus al-Ṭa'ālibī), Bahrām piercing sheep heads with his sword (I/g; plus al-Ṭa'ālibī), Hurmuzd IV asks Bahrām to return, but he refuses (I/h; plus al-Ya'qūbī), Bahrām's soldier assaults a woman (I/i; plus al-Ṭa'ālibī), Bahrām captures and kills a Turanian magician (II/g; plus al-Ya'qūbī), Bahrām Čübīn inspects Khāqān III's troops before the fight (III/a; plus al-Ṭa'ālibī), Khurrād-Burzīn and the scribe flee (IV/h; plus al-Dīnawarī), Khurrād-Burzīn informs Hurmuzd IV about Bahrām's actions (IV/i; plus al-Dīnawarī), Bahrām and Hurmuzd IV send insulting gifts to each other (IV/j and IV/k; plus al-Ya'qūbī), Khusraw II shoots an arrow at the horse of Bahrām Čübīn (V/g; plus al-Dīnawarī), Khusraw II wears a garment with Christian symbols on it (V/v; plus al-Ya'qūbī) and Bisṭām revolts and crowns himself (VII/h; plus al-Dīnawarī). In addition, the following smaller details appear in the trio plus one other text: age of forty for the soldiers of Bahrām Čübīn (BL II: 766, FD VII: 502, NH: 353) plus al-Dīnawarī (DN: 82); Bahrām presenting arguments for Hurmuzd IV (BL II: 767, FD: 504–5, NH: 353) plus al-Dīnawarī (DN: 82); the story of Hurmuzd IV's vizier's journey and death (BL II: 779–81, FD VII: 617–23, NH: 361–3) plus al-Dīnawarī (DN: 86–7); the use of war elephants (BL II: 770, 1012; FD VII: 538, NH: 357) plus al-Ṭa'ālibī (TB: 646); the motif of the Arabs helping Khusraw II which appears after Bahrām Siyāwuš chased Khusraw II into a monastery (BL II: 791–2, FD VIII: 75–9, NH: 371–2) plus al-Dīnawarī (DN: 95). In other accounts the development of the latter motif is different.

There are 10 narrative motifs that appear in Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* in addition to two other texts: Mihrān-Sitād tells an anecdote of Hurmuzd IV's mother (I/a; plus al-Ya'qūbī and *Mujmal*), Hurmuzd IV sends a man to Khāqān II (II/a; plus al-Ya'qūbī and al-Dīnawarī), Khāqān III and Hurmuzd IV meet outside the royal palace (III/i; plus al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭa'ālibī), assassination attempt of Bahrām on the polo field (V/I; plus al-Dīnawarī and *Mujmal*), Maurice discusses the situation in his court (V/p; plus al-Ya'qūbī and al-Dīnawarī), Khusraw II and Bindūy offer protection to the men of Bahrām after their defeat (V/aa; plus al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭa'ālibī), description of Bahrām's journey (VI/b; plus al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭa'ālibī), Bahrām halts at the house of an old woman (VI/c; plus al-Dīnawarī and al-Ṭa'ālibī), Bahrām fights and kills Khāqān IV's brother (VI/f; plus al-Ya'qūbī and al-Dīnawarī) and Bahrām's last words (VI/m; plus al-Ya'qūbī and al-Dīnawarī).

We can note that in the above examples al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī and al-Ṭa'ālibī repeatedly appear together with the trio Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat*. *Mujmal* appears once which is probably due to its connections to Firdawsī (see 1.6.13). Furthermore, if these seven texts are dealt with as one

extended group and if we include in it all the narrative motifs that appear in two to seven texts, fourteen additional narrative motifs appear.¹¹³ Some of the events immediately before Bahrām's death such as whispering a message in Bahrām's ear and a dagger hidden in a sleeve, belt or boot appear in the extended group too (see 3.4.4.1).

The narrative motifs associated with the texts of Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* amount to 38 and some of them share special characteristics. In the stories of Bahrām Čübīn, there are a handful of episodes containing prophecies and astrological predictions and, interestingly, they all appear in the extended group: a prophecy about Hurmuzd IV as a king and Bahrām Čübīn's physical appearance by an astrologer at the court of Khāqān I (see 3.1.3; YQ: 188, BL II: 765, FD: 496–7; NH: 352); Bahrām Čübīn piercing sheep heads with a sword interpreted as a prediction of the detrimental outcome of Bahrām's campaign (I/g); the prophecy of the female augur in the story of Hurmuzd IV's vizier going to apologize (see 3.2.10; DN: 86–7, BL II: 779–81, FD VII: 617–23, NH: 361–3); a Zoroastrian priest explaining the events of Bahrām Čübīn's hunting and finding in them the reason for Bahrām's extraordinary military capabilities (BL II: 777, FD VII: 591, NH: 361); a Christian monk foreseeing the outcome of Khusraw II's military campaign and the duration of his reign (BL II: 793, FD VIII: 81–5, NH: 372–3); the bad omen of the *Wahrām*-day told to Bahrām when he was young (DN: 104, FD VIII: 200, IB: 681, NH: 388). To my knowledge, the topos of prophecies and astrological predictions is not properly dealt with in the scholarly literature of Islamic historiography. Within the stories of Bahrām Čübīn, prophecies play a significant role and it is clear that they stem from earlier Middle Persian versions. Hopefully, the topos of prophecies and its use as a literary device will be dealt with in detail in further studies.¹¹⁴ Especially interesting would be to compare the accounts of pre-Islamic soothsayers (*kāhin* pl. *kuhhān*) to the accounts of pre-Islamic Persian origin.

It is important to recognize the texts associated with the group Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat*, but as important is to note the texts that are excluded. These include Ibn Qutayba, al-Ṭabarī, al-

¹¹³ These include: III/b (FD, IB, NH), III/e (BL, FD, IB), III/g (YQ, DN, BL, FD, IB, NH) IV/a (YQ, FD, IB), IV/e (DN, FD, NH), IV/I (DN, BL, FD), V/y (DN, BL, FD, IB), V/z (DN, BL, NH), VI/d (DN, BL, NH), VI/I (DN, FD, IB, NH), VI/m (YQ, DN, FD, IB, NH), VI/n (YQ, DN, FD, IB, NH), VII/i (YQ, DN, BL, FD, NH, MJ) and VII/k (DN, FD, NH).

¹¹⁴ For instance, Noth (1994) does not mention prophecies and predictions as a literary topos. Topics related to prophecies and predictions in general are dealt with e.g. by Moin's article "Partisan Dreams and Prophetic Visions: Shi'i Critique in al-Mas'ūdī's History of the Abbasids" (2007) and Weststeijn's article (2019) "Dreams of Abbasid Caliphs: Suspense and Tragedy in al-Ṭabarī's 'History of Prophets and Kings'" from the point of view of predictive dreams, dreams as vehicles of foreknowledge and dreams in general as a literary device. Both articles lack the Persian connection and in both the context is the Abbasid Islamic cultural milieu.

Mas'ūdī, al-Maḡdisī, Gardīzī, Ibn al-Balkhī and Ibn al-Aṭīr. By this division, we can classify the texts in the corpus into two groups:

Chart 33.

Bal'amī-Firdawsī-<i>Nihāyat</i>-trio and associated texts	Texts not associated with the group
al-Ya'qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, <i>Nihāyat</i> , <i>Mujmal</i> .	Ibn Qutayba, al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, al-Maḡdisī, Gardīzī, Ibn al-Balkhī, Ibn al-Aṭīr.

It should be stressed that the bipartite division is based on some narrative motifs and other details that concentrate in the texts of the extended group of Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat*. However, one cannot inversely identify specific narrative content in the group of Ibn Qutayba, al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, al-Maḡdisī, Gardīzī, Ibn al-Balkhī and Ibn al-Aṭīr. It seems that the extended Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat*-group is reducible, regarding the shared content, to one textual tradition, namely that of *K. mufrad fī akhbār Bahrām Jūbīn*, whereas the other group has used other sources from other textual tradition(s). The definition of the latter group is therefore referential and based on exclusion. Furthermore, one cannot be sure whether the cleavage is exclusively reducible to the 'separate book' exclusively or to a broader textual tradition, e.g., a set of books such as unauthored collections or "source books" discussed above (Savant, 2014: 123–5; 1.7).

Above I argued that al-Mas'ūdī did not use the 'separate book' for his version of the Bahrām Čübīn story although he might have seen the book, read it or, at least, heard about it. After the analysis of the Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat*-connection, the argument becomes even more clear. As *Murūj al-Dhahab* lacks a connection to the Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* trio and the texts associated with it, it becomes evident that the 'separate book' really was a secondary source for al-Mas'ūdī: the content of his primary source was something entirely different.

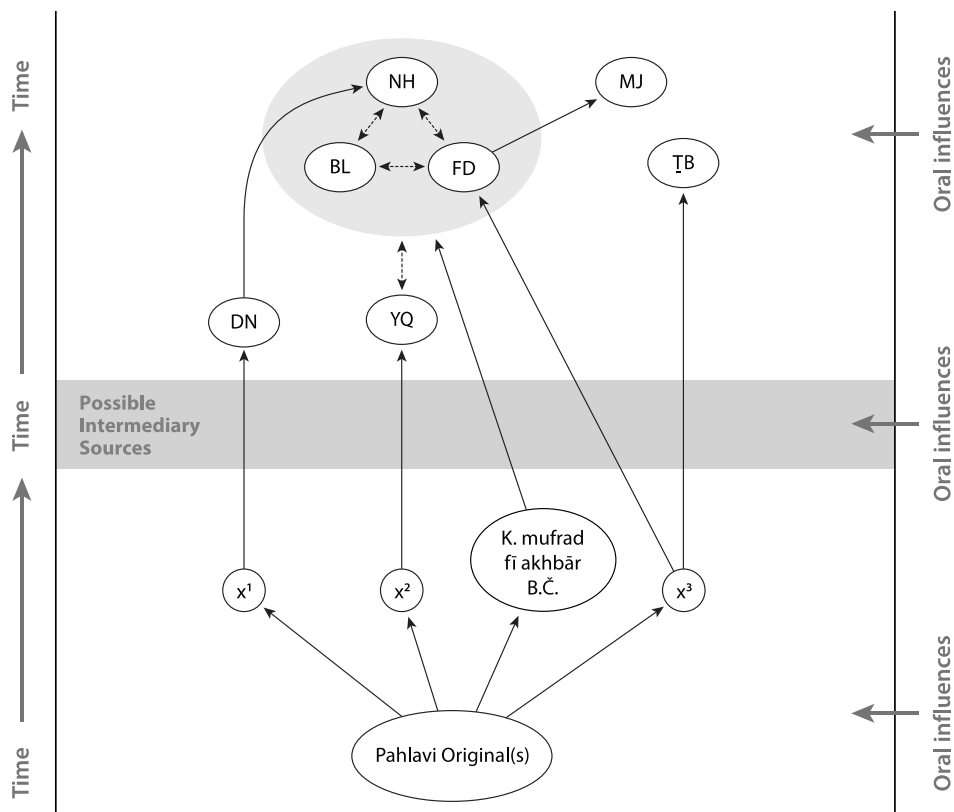
Furthermore, we cannot be sure whether the name "*akhbār Bahrām Jūbīn*" was a book title or a description of the content generated by al-Mas'ūdī. The title appears to be rather general. Like the word *ta'riḫ* (pl. *tawārīḫ*), *khavar* (pl. *akhbār*) can refer to many sorts of reports, stories or histories. It is possible that al-Mas'ūdī heard about the book or read a text about Bahrām Čübīn without a title and later described the content as the 'separate book for the stories/accounts of Bahrām Čübīn'.

What is more, the connection between *K. mufrad fī akhbār Bahrām Jūbīn* (MS I: 318) and *K. Bahrām Šūbīn* mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm (1872: 305) is unclear. If the title of the former is a description by al-Mas'ūdī, could the two names refer to the same book? It is very unlikely that this

is the case. The analysis of al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī shows that behind the four texts may be as many as seven source texts. This is only the tip of an iceberg and reflects the survival bias of the texts. In reality, the number of Arabic texts behind the existing material was probably higher. Therefore, *K. Bahrām Šūbīn* refers to one of the many Arabic adaptations of the Bahrām Čūbīn stories. It is difficult to say more because we do not have any description of the book.

In any case, the division into two large groups is real and helpful in mapping the underlying dynamics of the texts. The division also adds to the understanding of the quartet al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī (see 4.3.8): al-Dīnawarī and al-Ya'qūbī are associated with the Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* trio and al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī are clearly not. Figure 2 explains the connections in visual form. The dotted line signifies an uncertain or undefined connection:

Fig. 2.



The Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* trio derives from *K. Mufrad fī Akhbār Bahrām Jūbīn* (MS I: 318) (whatever the exact identity of that book may be). The inner dynamics of the group are unclear and the material overlaps in many ways. Oral sources may have influenced the written texts too. However, many things can be deciphered. Inside the group, the connection between Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* seems strong and certain (see 4.5 below). Firdawsī's version certainly combines many textual traditions (4.8, 4.9): Firdawsī probably culled material from shorter texts to compose a fuller account on Bahrām Čübīn. Distribution of the narrative motifs and Firdawsī covering most of them indicates this (Appendix A). The previous research shows that Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālībī had a common source (Zotenberg, 1900: 18–40; see 1.6.9) and that *Mujmal*'s writer drew from the *Šāhnāma* (1.6.13). Al-Dīnawarī and al-Ya'qūbī are not related in any way, but they both have a connection to the Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* group. Al-Dīnawarī's connection can be explained by the strong link to *Nihāyat* (1.6.10, 4.6). Al-Ya'qūbī's link to the trio is evident but unspecific. It remains an open question whether al-Ya'qūbī drew from the same source as Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* – namely that of *K. mufrad* – or whether they had another common intermediary source. Most probably they are linked through some intermediary source(s).

4.5. Bal'amī and *Nihāyat*

A surprising connection appears between Bal'amī and *Nihāyat*. In the analysis, they often surface together. The connection is supported by many details and nomenclature. Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* share 75/104¹¹⁵ of the narrative motifs and differ in 29/104 while Bal'amī covers 78/104 narrative motifs in total and *Nihāyat* 87/104.

The following nomenclature connects the two: the city of al-Šīz (BL II: 795; NH: 370, 375–6), the city of Raqqa (BL II: 792; NH: 372), Ṭabasayn (BL II: 768; NH: 355), al-Qusṭanṭīniyya or Constantinople (BL II: 794; NH: 373) and Jalūlā / Dašt-i Jalūlā (BL II: 783; NH: 365) appear only in Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* as do the characters Bahrām Gūr (BL II: 763; NH: 367) and Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm (BL II: 793; NH: 373). In addition, the names of the man introducing Mihrān-Sitād stem from the same origin (see 3.1.2). The two texts share some vocabulary (3.4.1) and have notable structural similarities (3.3.1). Both Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* describe the assassination attempt of Bahrām Čübīn specifically on the polo field (BL II: 788–9; NH: 369). They both refer to 12,000 knives and explain why Bahrām sends the knives with

¹¹⁵ I/a, I/b, I/c, I/d, I/e, I/f, I/g, I/h, I/i, II/a, II/c, II/d, II/e, II/f, II/g, III/a, III/c, III/f, III/g, III/i, IV/b, IV/c, IV/d, IV/f, IV/g, IV/h, IV/i, IV/j, IV/k, IV/n, IV/o, IV/p, IV/q, V/a, V/b, V/d, V/e, V/f, V/g, V/h, V/i, V/j, V/k, V/l, V/m, V/n, V/o, V/p, V/q, V/r, V/s, V/t, V/u, V/v, V/w, V/x, V/z, V/aa, VI/a, VI/b, VI/c, VI/d, VI/f, VI/g, VI/i, VI/j, VI/k, VI/o, VII/c, VII/h, VII/i, VII/m, VII/p and VII/q.

bent tips (NH: 361, BL II: 775). What is more, there are some narrative motifs that are significant because they are missing in both texts. In narrative block II, for example, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* cover all the seven narrative motifs except II/b; in narrative block III, they both lack the narrative motifs III/d, III/h, III/j and III/k and in narrative block V, they are both missing only narrative motif V/c.

Some passages appear, expectedly, in the three versions of al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat*. As the connection of al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* is well known and because al-Dīnawarī and Bal'amī do not show an apparent connection, it is reasonable to suggest that in the narrative motifs where the three appear together, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* are linked, not al-Dīnawarī and Bal'amī. These passages include the following: A man from the Ṭayy' tribe called Iyyās b. Qubaysa (DN: 95; BL II: 791–2; NH: 371–2); a son of Hurmuzd IV called Šahriyār (DN: 94; BL II: 778, 788–9, 834; NH: 370); the names of places such as Ḥulwān (DN: 107; BL II: 783; NH: 390, 392), Qūmis (DN: 99, 102, 106; BL II: 799; NH: 380, 391) and Naṣībīn (DN: 81; BL II: 760; NH: 350). In addition, all three mention Hurmuzd IV giving orders to Bahrām to put the shackle on his neck, spin the spindle and dress in the women's clothes (DN: 85, BL II: 774, NH: 359; 3.2.7). This detail is absent in other versions.

The connection seems apparent but the direction of the influence is uncertain. As this textual analysis is limited to the Bahrām Čūbīn account, we cannot be sure whether or not Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* are linked elsewhere. A more extensive comparison between the two would reveal this. In our context, many questions arise: Was Bal'amī's text, as we know it in Rawšan's edition, a direct source for *Nihāyat*? Did the two authors use a common source in Arabic? These questions are extremely complicated to answer given the unknown dating of *Nihāyat* and the very complex manuscript tradition of Bal'amī (Peacock, 2007: 3; see 1.6.6). Since a possible, though uncertain dating of *Nihāyat* is set at the beginning of the 11th century (Christensen, 1936: 65; Klima, 1957: 17), posterior to *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī*'s composition, it is tempting to suggest that the textual tradition of Bal'amī has, in one way or another, influenced *Nihāyat*. In that case, the two would have had a common source. Probably *Nihāyat*'s writer did not use Bal'amī's text directly. If this was the case, one would expect even more shared content. Whether *Nihāyat* was written at the beginning of the 11th century or earlier, the earliest known textual content seems to go back to al-Dīnawarī's text.

As we know, in medieval Islamic context, authorship and content were fluctuant concepts (Günther, 2002; Leder, 1988). For me, *Nihāyat* seems to be a mosaic-like text embodying many layers of texts from many time periods: the content accrued over time (4.6, 4.7). If that was the case, did the influence of *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī* fall on *Nihāyat* chronologically before or after al-Dīnawarī? Or did the writer of *Nihāyat* use both sources simultaneously? I argue that originally

Nihāyat shared the same source(s) with al-Dīnawarī and the two versions were much alike. In the process of copying and rewriting, the text gradually changed and additions, including those of Bal'amī, accrued over time. The copyists may have added material from other Bahrām Čübīn accounts. By all means, al-Dīnawarī and Bal'amī, as we know them today, clearly represent two different textual traditions and one cannot suppose that both were included in the same original source. They clearly present two layers of influence that did not occur simultaneously. One was after the other and since we roughly know the dating of the texts, it is natural to suggest that al-Dīnawarī was before Bal'amī.

In theory, another possibility would be that both al-Dīnawarī and Bal'amī stem directly from *Nihāyat*, supposing that the dating of *Nihāyat* would be much earlier. Since the account of *Nihāyat* is the longest Arabic account (46 pages), longer than al-Dīnawarī (29 pages), and has rich nomenclature, profuse details and a meandering style, it is difficult to see that it could precede al-Dīnawarī. Much of its material was added in the course of time (see fig. 3, p. 205).

4.6. Al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*

The connections between al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* have been known in scholarship since the 19th century (Nöldeke, 1879: 475–6; Browne, 1900; Grignaschi, 1969). Al-Dīnawarī's 29-page account on Bahrām Čübīn is shorter than *Nihāyat*'s massive 46-page story. The figures of similarity and difference of the narrative motifs are 67/104¹¹⁶ and 37/104 while al-Dīnawarī covers 71/104 narrative motifs in total and *Nihāyat* 87/104.

As al-Dīnawarī is shorter than *Nihāyat*, it is important to discern the narrative motifs that appear in al-Dīnawarī and not in *Nihāyat*. These include the following four: Hurmuzd IV praises Bahrām for his victories and sends him gifts (III/j, shared with al-Ṭabarī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, Ibn al-Balkhī), Bahrām discusses the legitimacy of kingship with his men (IV/l, with Bal'amī, Firdawsī), Khusraw II sends one of his generals to inspect Bahrām's troops (V/c, with Firdawsī) and Khusraw II sends a smaller detachment to fight Bahrām Čübīn V/y (shared with Bal'amī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī). The latter is associated with the group Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat*.

Vice versa, there are 20 narrative motifs that appear only in *Nihāyat*. Of these, 16 appear in connection with the group Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat*¹¹⁷ (4.4) and four with a larger group of

¹¹⁶ I/b, I/c, I/d, II/a, II/c, II/e, II/f, III/c, III/g, III/i, IV/b, IV/c, IV/d, IV/e, IV/h, IV/i, IV/n, IV/o, IV/p, IV/q, V/a, V/b, V/d, V/e, V/f, V/g, V/h, V/i, V/j, V/k, V/l, V/m, V/n, V/p, V/q, V/r, V/s, V/t, V/u, V/w, V/x, V/z, V/aa, VI/a, VI/b, VI/c, VI/d, VI/f, VI/i, VI/j, VI/k, VI/l, VI/m, VI/n, VI/o, VII/a, VII/c, VII/d, VII/h, VII/i, VII/j, VII/k, VII/l, VII/m, VII/o, VII/p and VII/q.

¹¹⁷ I/a, I/e, I/f, I/g, I/h, I/i, II/d, II/g, III/a, III/b, IV/f, IV/j, IV/k, V/o, V/v and VI/g.

texts: Khāqān III entrenches himself in a castle (III/f, with al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, Ibn al-Aṭīr), Bahrām ascends the throne (IV/g, with al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, Ibn al-Balkhī, *Mujmal*, Ibn al-Aṭīr), Khāqān IV's brother proposes to Gurdiya (VII/f, with al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Ṭa'ālibī), Gurdiya kills Khāqān IV's brother (VII/g, with al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī).

There are some notable differences. For instance, the name of the bridge mentioned in association with the first fight between Bahrām and Khusraw II is different: al-Dīnawarī provides the name *Qanṭarat Jūdarz* (DN: 90) whereas *Nihāyat* has *Qanṭarat Kārsūn* (NH: 366). Both accounts provide unique nomenclature for the corpus: a general in Khusraw II's army called Bād b. Fayrūz (DN: 90), a son of Gurdiya called Jawān Šīr b. Kisrā (DN: 114), a man who Khusraw II meets at the Yarmouk River Khālid b. Jabalat al-Ghassānī (DN: 95), and a brother of Bindūy called Mardān Bih Qahrimān (DN: 106) are not found in any version other than al-Dīnawarī. In addition, al-Dīnawarī is the only text that explains the context of Bahrām's soldiers' argument about why they should revolt against Hurmuzd IV (DN: 85–86; see 3.2.8). Similarly, Bahrām's two generals called Bandād Jusnas b. al-Jalhān al-Rāzī and Bandād Yamīdīn b. Dāštān Šāh (NH: 353), Khāqān I's diviner called Kundugh (NH: 351) and the city of Banān (NH: 358), just to mention a few, are exclusively found in *Nihāyat*.

Despite the few differences, the two texts are very similar and in many places parallel. For instance, they cover extensively the material on Biṣṭām and Bindūy and at the end of the story (narrative block VII), more than Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma*. Verbatim or quasi-similar passages are too many to be listed here. They present by far the strongest connection in the corpus which can be used as an example to gauge the degree of dependence regarding other pairs in the corpus.

4.7. *Nihāyat*'s structure and uncertain dating

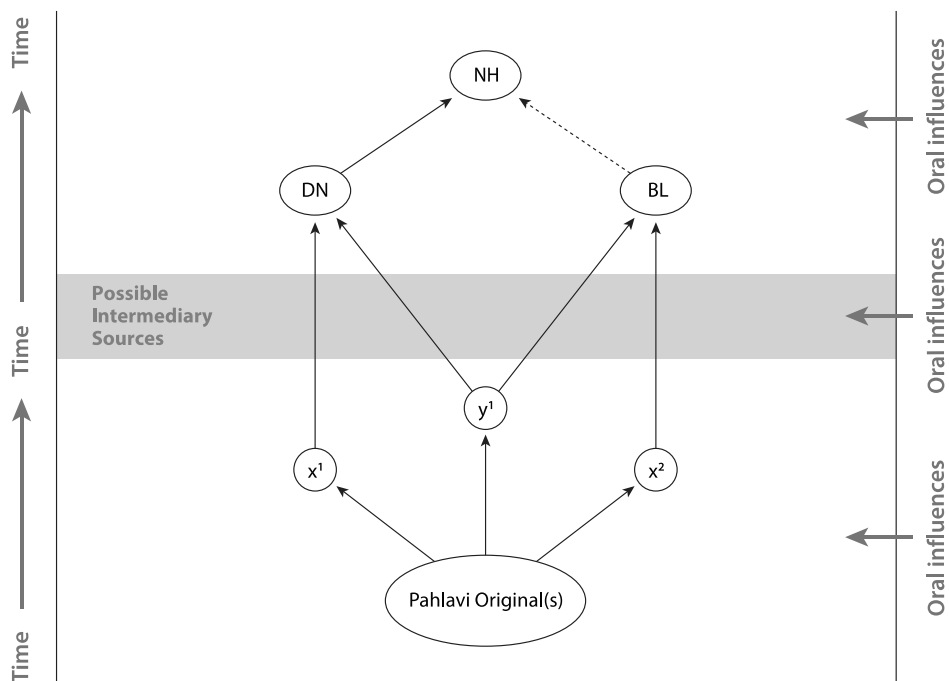
Nihāyat's writer's identity and the dating have long been a question mark but, as noted above, the first half of the 11th century has been suggested. On the other hand, in two articles, Grignaschi claims that *Nihāyat*'s text preceded the texts of Ibn Faqīh al-Hamadhānī's *K. al-Buldān*, Abū al-Faḍl Bayhaqī's (995–1077) *K. al-Maḥāsin wa-l-Masāwī* and al-Dīnawarī's *K. al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl* (1969: 19, 20, 39; 1974: 86, 88). However, Grignaschi does not present a coherent theory or conclusive proof, and, regarding al-Dīnawarī's text, I argue the opposite. As a general note, the version of *Nihāyat* is richer in details, narrative motifs and nomenclature which suggests that al-Dīnawarī's text preceded *Nihāyat*, not *vice versa*, which is in line with the general tendency for texts to accrue material over time. Often, but not always, texts tend to extend rather than diminish. In the light of the analysis of

Bahrām Čübīn stories, it makes sense chronologically that *Nihāyat* was written ca. 1000–1050 – in any case, after *K. al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*.

I suggest that a stratigraphical survey, to borrow a term from geology, is possible regarding *Nihāyat* and its Bahrām Čübīn account. The version of *Nihāyat* is, it seems, a multi-layered fabric of texts, a palimpsest. The oldest layer is exhibited by the obvious connection to al-Dīnawarī. The other connection, weaker but evident, is that to Bal'amī's *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī*. It is difficult to establish a strict chronology between the two influences for two reasons. First, the manuscript tradition of Bal'amī is long and confused. Second, a source used by two texts may chronologically precede the earlier text in which the traces of that source are preserved. Survival bias plays a role here too. In this context, it is impossible to ascertain whether the link to al-Dīnawarī presents an older “segment” than the connection to Bal'amī. In theory, Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* may have a common source written earlier than al-Dīnawarī which does not rule out that the author of *Nihāyat* has used al-Dīnawarī's text as his primary source. It is clear, however, in *Nihāyat*, at least two “segments” can be identified. A thorough study of *Nihāyat* and comparison to other texts could reveal more connections to other texts. It would be equally interesting to study whether the influence of Bal'amī is limited to the story of Bahrām Čübīn or it is pervasive in other parts of the *Nihāyat* too.

Figure 3 explains the connections in visual form. In this figure, the dotted line signifies the uncertainty about whether *Nihāyat*'s writer used Bal'amī directly or whether they have a common source. I believe that the latter possibility is more likely to be correct.

Fig. 3.



4.8. Firdawsī's links to al-Ṭa'ālibī

Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma* has the longest and most detailed account covering 374 pages or 3732 verses. It is by far the longest version of Bahrām Čübīn story.¹¹⁸ It seems that many individual texts are interwoven in Firdawsī's version. One of them is al-Ṭa'ālibī. Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī share 61/104¹¹⁹ narrative motifs and differ in 43/104 while Firdawsī covers 97/104 narrative motifs in total and al-Ṭa'ālibī 63/104.

As we have seen above, al-Ṭa'ālibī is associated with the group Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* which links the two texts. Many details indicate a special link between Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī and that they have a common source: the flag of Rostam (*rāyat rustam*) (FD VIII: 507; ṬB: 644), a brother of Khāqān II called Faghfūra (FD VII: 495, 517, 518, 529, 548; ṬB: 644–6, 648), Bahrām Čübīn sending a letter and heads of Khāqān II and Faghfūra to Hurmuzd IV (FD VII: 544–6; ṬB: 648), Khāqān IV

¹¹⁸ In Firdawsī's text only seven narrative motifs are missing: V/z, VI/d, VII/d, VII/f, VII/j, VII/l and VII/n.

¹¹⁹ I/b, I/c, I/d, I/f, I/g, I/i, II/c, II/e, II/f, III/a, III/b, III/c, III/d, III/e, III/f, III/g, III/h, III/i, III/j, IV/a, IV/b, IV/c, IV/d, IV/g, IV/m, IV/n, IV/o, IV/q, V/a, V/b, V/d, V/e, V/f, V/i, V/j, V/q, V/r, V/t, V/w, V/x, V/y, V/aa, VI/a, VI/b, VI/c, VI/e, VI/h, VI/i, VI/j, VI/k, VI/l, VI/m, VI/n, VI/o, VI/p, VII/a, VII/c, VII/e, VII/g, VII/o, VII/q.

addressing speech to Bahrām Čübīn (FD VIII: 169–70; IB: 674–5), Gurdiya questioning Bahrām’s right to power (FD VIII: 35–8, 202–3; IB: 682–3) and Siāwuš’s earrings and a pair of boots with golden and jewel ornaments (FD VII: 572–3, 576; IB: 657; 3.2.6). In addition, the narrative motif of Khāqān IV sending his brother to catch Gurdiya (VII/e) appears exclusively in the two texts (FD VIII: 210, 215–8; IB: 684–5). The city of Paykand, mentioned in al-Ṭa’ālibī’s text as the place where Khāqān III dwells and the fortress named Āwāz in the *Šāhnāma* might also connect the two (see 3.2.3). These connecting details are many. Conversely, only two narrative motifs (VII/f, VII/n) in al-Ṭa’ālibī appear without Firdawsī.

The connection of Firdawsī and al-Ṭa’ālibī is recognized in the previous research: the two have a common source, but the latter cannot utterly depend on the former (Zotenberg, 1900: 18–40; Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 149–52). One has to remember that the previous studies have dealt with the two texts as a whole, not with any passages or stories in particular, such as the story of Bahrām Čübīn, which might yield different results. By contrast, this study considers the story of Bahrām Čübīn only, not the totality of the texts. Therefore, I suggest a conclusion which is quite contrary to that put forward by Zotenberg and Hämeen-Anttila. It seems that in the story of Bahrām Čübīn, al-Ṭa’ālibī could have relied completely on the common source with Firdawsī.

Of the narrative motifs presented by al-Ṭa’ālibī, only two are missing in Firdawsī’s account (VII/f, VII/n) whereas Firdawsī provides 36 narrative motifs¹²⁰ missing in *Ghurār Akhbār Mulūk al-Furs wa-Siyari-him*. Many authors, if not all, rewrote and edited their original sources to some extent and the two missing narrative motifs in *Šāhnāma* might be Firdawsī’s voluntary omissions. The 36 additional narrative motifs in Firdawsī’s text, however, cannot be explained by circumstantial factors such as additions or errors of the copyist: the amount of the content is simply too great. Thus, it seems evident that Firdawsī has incorporated in the *Šāhnāma* material from sources other than that common with al-Ṭa’ālibī.

4.9. Firdawsī and other texts

In the course of the above analysis, we have often asked questions concerning links between different accounts such as “to which texts is this or that version connected?” In Firdawsī’s case the question should be reversed: With which texts does *Šāhnāma* not share content? Firdawsī has a strong presence in the charts of the narrative motifs in all parts of the story. Only seven narrative

¹²⁰ I/a, I/e, I/h, II/a, II/b, II/d, II/g, III/k, IV/e, IV/f, IV/h, IV/i, IV/j, IV/k, IV/l, IV/p, V/c, V/g, V/h, V/k, V/l, V/m, V/n, V/o, V/p, V/s, V/u, V/v, VI/f, VI/g, VII/b, VII/h, VII/i, VII/k, VII/m and VII/p.

motifs are missing in Firdawsī's version.¹²¹ Despite the pervasiveness of Firdawsī's account, one can identify at least two or three influences in addition to the common source with al-Ṭa'ālibī.

First, one should analyse the 36 narrative motifs absent in al-Ṭa'ālibī's version. Of these, 23¹²² belong to the Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* group. The remaining 13 narrative motifs provide interesting results: Firdawsī seems to share content with al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rikh* that does not belong to the Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* group. In the following six narrative motifs, connections to al-Ṭabarī alongside Ibn al-Balkhī and/or Ibn al-Aṭīr appear: letter from Khāqān II to Hurmuz IV (II/b, with al-Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Balkhī, Ibn al-Aṭīr), Hurmuz IV sends his vizier to apologize (IV/p with al-Ya'qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, Bal'amī, *Nihāyat*, Ibn al-Balkhī), Hurmuz IV advises Khusraw II to seek help from Maurice (V/h, with al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, Bal'amī, *Nihāyat*, Gardīzī, Ibn al-Balkhī, *Mujmal*, Ibn al-Aṭīr), Bahrām Siyāwuš and Bindūy plan the assassination of Bahrām Čübīn (V/k, with al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, Bal'amī, *Nihāyat*, Ibn al-Balkhī, Ibn al-Aṭīr), Khusraw II writes to Maurice (V/m, with Ibn Qutayba, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, Bal'amī, *Nihāyat*, Ibn al-Balkhī) and Maurice sends "men worth a thousand men" to help Khusraw II (V/s, with al-Ya'qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī, Bal'amī, *Nihāyat*, Ibn al-Balkhī, Ibn al-Aṭīr). Of these, the first one (II/b) is the most important because the connection to al-Ṭabarī appears without other versions.

What is more, Firdawsī's links to al-Ṭabarī can be deduced from two other details. In al-Ṭabarī's version, the companions of Khusraw II include Kurdī (brother of Bahrām), Bindūy, Bisṭām, Sābūr b. Afaryān b. Farrukhẓād, Farrukh-Hurmuz and Abādar (TB I: 1000) who all, according to Bosworth (Al-Ṭabarī, 1999: 313, n. 735), are given in one manuscript of Firdawsī's *Šāhnāma* (TB XV: DXCV). Both al-Ṭabarī and Firdawsī mention the archer Sūkhra (TB I: 992–3; FD VIII: 125–6), absent in other texts, and a letter from Khāqān II (see 3.2.1), which form a connection between the two. I suggest that there must be a common source for al-Ṭabarī and Firdawsī.

Firdawsī's connection to the *K. al-Akhbār al-Tiwāl* text should be noted too. There are some signs indicating that al-Dīnawarī's version follows an independent textual tradition regarding *Šāhnāma* but there are some details too that connect the two texts. First, of the seven narrative motifs missing completely in Firdawsī's text, *K. al-Akhbār al-Tiwāl* text covers five,¹²³ which points towards an independent line of textual transmission. Second, there are two important details that seem to connect Firdawsī and al-Dīnawarī: Only the two evoke the book *Kalīla wa-Dimna* and Bahrām Čübīn

¹²¹ V/z, VI/d, VII/d, VII/f, VII/j, VII/l and VII/n.

¹²² I/a, I/e, I/h, II/a, II/d, II/g, IV/e, IV/f, IV/h, IV/i, IV/j, IV/k, IV/l, V/g, V/l, V/o, V/p, V/v, VI/f, VI/g, VII/h, VII/i and VII/k.

¹²³ V/z, VI/d, VII/d, VII/j and VII/l.

reading it (DN: 89; FD VIII: 9) and Khusraw II sending one of his generals to inspect Bahrām's troops (V/c). What is more, the following three narrative motifs seem to underline the connection between two textual traditions recognized in this study, that of Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī and that of al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat*: the death of Bahrām occurs on the day of *Wahrām* (VI/l, al-Dīnawarī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, *Nihāyat*), Bahrām Čübīn appoints Mardān-Sīna as leader of the army (VI/n, al-Dīnawarī, Firdawsī, al-Ṭa'ālibī, *Nihāyat*) and Biṣṭām unites with the former troops of Bahrām Čübīn (VII/k, al-Dīnawarī, Firdawsī, *Nihāyat*). Based on the above analysis, I suggest that Firdawsī's version of the Bahrām Čübīn story contains, at least, four layers:

- 1) the shared source of Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālibī;
- 2) the influence of the Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* trio stemming from the 'separate book';
- 3) the influence of al-Ṭabarī and the related texts (Ibn al-Balkhī);
- 4) the influence of al-Dīnawarī.

It is plausible to assume that Firdawsī culled material from shorter accounts to compose a fuller account on Bahrām Čübīn. Khaleghi-Motlagh (1372 (= 1993): 32–5; 1386 (= 2007) and Omidsalar (2011: 44–6, 67, 161–6) advocate the idea that Firdawsī's main source was a written source, namely the *Khudāynāmag* and its adaptations in Arabic. They do not, however, suggest that there could have been many written sources, which, in light of this analysis is possible and even probable. As far as I am aware, only Ṣafā (1321: 193–206) suggests multiple written sources for Firdawsī.

4.10. Al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī

Al-Ṭabarī's eight-page story on Bahrām Čübīn is considerably shorter than Bal'amī's version of 54 pages. The figures of similarity and difference of the narrative motifs are 39/104¹²⁴ and 65/104 while al-Ṭabarī covers 47/104 narrative motifs and Bal'amī 78/104.

We have seen above (1.1.6) that Bal'amī's *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī* claims to be a 'translation' of al-Ṭabarī's *Tārīkh*. A more accurate description would be an adaptation or a text influenced by al-Ṭabarī. By his own admission, the author abridged, rearranged, supplemented and even critiqued al-Ṭabarī's text he was supposed to be translating (Daniel 2003: 164). As an overall remark, one can notice a certain degree of similarity in content and rendering (Peacock 2007: 1–14). However, in the story of Bahrām Čübīn, Bal'amī's text is longer and more elaborate.

¹²⁴ I/b, I/c, I/d, II/c, II/e, II/f, III/c, III/f, IV/d, IV/g, IV/m, IV/o, IV/p, IV/q, V/a, V/b, V/d, V/e, V/f, V/h, V/i, V/j, V/k, V/m, V/n, V/q, V/r, V/s, V/t, V/u, V/w, V/x, VI/a, VI/i, VI/j, VI/k, VI/o, VII/c and VII/q.

Al-Ṭabarī appears without Bal'amī in seven narrative motifs.¹²⁵ Five of these¹²⁶ al-Ṭabarī shares with Firdawsī among other texts, which suggests a connection with the *Šāhnāma* (possibly a common source). The difference between al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī can be clearly observed toward the end of the story in four narrative motifs of the seventh narrative block (VII/a, VII/f, VII/g, VII/n) after the death of Bahrām Čübīn. In this section, al-Ṭabarī covers seven and Bal'amī six narrative motifs but they match only on two, showing that they used different sources, and, more importantly, that Bal'amī certainly did not use al-Ṭabarī as a source in this section.

Correspondingly, Bal'amī appears without al-Ṭabarī in 40 narrative motifs. Of these, 34¹²⁷ are among the 38 narrative motifs connected to the group of Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* (4.4) and six appear with Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* accompanied by various other texts.¹²⁸

There are only three recognizable common motifs in the two texts. First, in both versions Bahrām Čübīn is compared to eminent legendary figures of the past: al-Ṭabarī compares Bahrām to Āriš and Sūkhra (ṬB I: 992–3) and Bal'amī to Bahrām Gūr (BL II: 763; see 3.1.4). The content is different, but the motif remains the same and the fact that this motif is absent in other sources creates an obvious link between the two. Second, both al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī mention the names 'Abbās al-Aḥwal and 'Amr al-Azraq (ṬB I: 991; BL II: 760; see 3.1.1) among the Arabs who attack Iran. Al-Mas'ūdī, Firdawsī and Gardīzī mention one or two of the Arabs as well, but only the names of al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī match entirely. Third, al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī describe the people's reaction after Bahrām's ascension the throne similarly, the only difference being that al-Ṭabarī describes Bahrām first sitting on the throne after which the reactions are described whereas in Bal'amī's account the order is reversed (ṬB I: 999; BL II: 789–90; 3.5.3).

When compared to other strong links in the corpus (al-Dīnawarī–*Nihāyat*, Bal'amī–*Nihāyat* or Firdawsī–al-Ṭa'ālibī), the connection between al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī seems weak, if not completely absent. This should be emphasized and noted since Bal'amī's work claims to be a translation/adaptation of al-Ṭabarī's. Of course, verbatim passages are impossible to find because the two texts are written in different languages, but this does not prevent finding analogies in the texts. The apparent link between Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* is a good example.

¹²⁵ II/b, III/j, VI/p, VII/a, VII/f, VII/g and VII/n.

¹²⁶ II/b, III/j, VI/p, VII/a and VII/g.

¹²⁷ I/a, I/e, I/f, I/g, I/h, I/i, II/a, II/d, II/g, III/a, III/e, III/g, III/i, IV/f, IV/h, IV/i, IV/j, IV/k, IV/l, V/g, V/l, V/o, V/p, V/v, V/y, V/z, V/aa, VI/b, VI/c, VI/d, VI/f, VI/g, VII/h and VII/i.

¹²⁸ IV/b, IV/c, IV/g, IV/n, VII/m and VII/p.

Bal'amī has apparently used source(s) other than al-Ṭabarī in the story of Bahrām Čübīn. Bal'amī's text forms an integral part of the Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* group whereas al-Ṭabarī is not associated with the group. Al-Ṭabarī's influence on the texts of Ibn al-Balkhī and Ibn al-Aṭīr is far more apparent than al-Ṭabarī's influence on *Tārīkhnāma-yi Ṭabarī*. Of course, this remark applies exclusively to the story of Bahrām Čübīn, not to the two texts in their entirety.

4.11. Al-Maqdisī's two sources (Ibn Qutayba and al-Mas'ūdī)

Al-Maqdisī refers to al-Mas'ūdī as his source many times (MQ III: 145–146, 158, 164, 172; see 1.6.7). Therefore, the evident connection that appears in the episode of the Arabs helping Khusraw II on his way to Byzantium (3.3.1) is not a surprise. The names of one of the Arabs (Ḥassān al-Ṭā'ī) are very similar and the fact that both mention the horse of Khusraw II certainly connect the two. In addition, al-Maqdisī has an apparent connection with Ibn Qutayba (1.5). Al-Maqdisī has *recognizable* connections to two other texts which is a rare feat in the corpus. Al-Maqdisī's text is so short that the two verified sources explain almost entirely the content he has for Bahrām Čübīn.

4.12. Al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Balkhī

Ibn al-Balkhī mentions al-Ṭabarī as a source at the beginning of the *Fārsnāma* (BKh: 8). The influence of the latter can be clearly seen in the distribution of the narrative motifs. Only three of the 35 narrative motifs covered by Ibn al-Balkhī appear without al-Ṭabarī. Of these three, two (VII/b, VII/e) seem to be linked to Firdawsī and one (VII/m) to a larger group of texts. Other similarities are found too: the two texts present similar reasons for the revolt (3.2.8); in both texts (along with al-Ya'qūbī) Hurmuzd IV sends someone to fight against Bahrām Čübīn instead of the vizier (ṬB I: 995, BKh: 99; 3.2.10); and the city of Anṭākiya is mentioned in connection to Khusraw II's travel to Byzantium (ṬB I: 999; BKh: 102). As Ibn al-Aṭīr is closely related to al-Ṭabarī, the three form a group in the corpus.

4.13. Other connections

In addition to the dependencies discussed above, there are other noticeable connections that appear rarely or only once. One example is that of al-Ya'qūbī, al-Mas'ūdī and *Nihāyat* regarding the city of Edessa (*al-Ruhā*) (3.3, 4.3.6). One common name forms a sporadic piece of evidence. Had the link been a verbatim or quasi-similar phrase, one would have to suggest a common source. Here this is not the case. The detail possibly reflects remote earlier sources and the pool of common content of the corpus.

A similar type of weak connection, although a bit stronger, also appears between al-Mas'ūdī and Gardīzī. They both have the same name for Hurmuzd IV's vizier (MS I: 313; GD: 99; 3.2.5) and provide a similar list of legendary Turanian kings (MS: 313; GD: 98–99; 3.2.4.5).

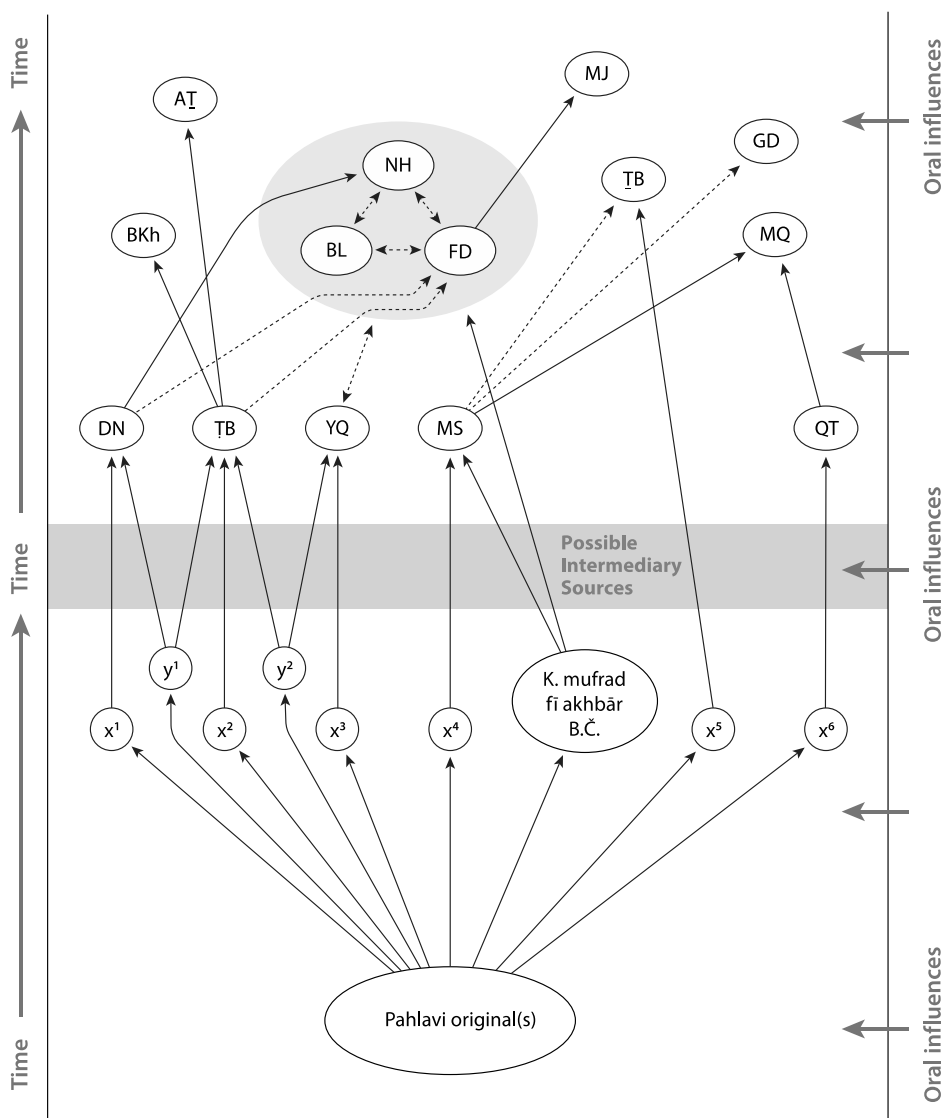
An entirely new connection appears between al-Mas'ūdī and al-Ṭa'ālibī regarding the denouncing sentence of Hurmuzd IV's vizier (MS I: 313; ṬB: 657; 3.2.6). The phrase of al-Ṭa'ālibī explains al-Mas'ūdī's slightly obscure phrase which might be a lapse of the copyist's hand or attributed to confusion over the diacritic marks of the letters. There might be a common source between the two.

These details illustrate the complex and often untraceable connections between the texts. It seems that the stories of Bahrām Čūbīn were copied and rewritten many times and in this process the connections were blurred or obliterated.

4.14. The map of connections

Figure 4 below combines the information discussed above from Figures 1 and 2. The figures present the main findings of the study in a nutshell. As in the previous figures, the dotted lines represent an uncertain or undefined connection whereas full lines a strong and certain connection. The arrows point in the direction of the influence:

Fig. 4.



The figure shows that the texts of the group al-Ya'qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī derive from different textual traditions (4.3.8). Behind the quartet stand at least seven source texts that stem from Pahlavi original(s). The figure shows the weak but noticeable links between al-Mas'ūdī and Gardīzī, al-Mas'ūdī and al-Ṭa'ālibī (4.13). The figure indicates the evident connection between al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Balkhī (4.12); al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Aṭīr (1.6.14); and al-Dīnawarī and

Nihāyat (4.6). Firdawsī's connections to different texts (4.7, 4.8) as well as Ibn Qutayba's and al-Mas'ūdī's connection to al-Maqdisī (1.5, 4.11). It also shows that the trio Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* probably derives from the textual tradition of *K. Mufrad fī Akhbār Bahrām Jūbīn* (MS I: 318; 4.4). Specifically, in the story of Bahrām Čübīn, there is no real connection between al-Ṭabarī and Bal'amī (4.10). It is reasonable to suggest that the fourteen sources of the corpus are based on at least nine earlier unknown Arabic adaptations of original Middle Persian texts. One or several of them might be *K. Bahrām Šūbīn* (Ibn al-Nadīm, 1872: 305). It is impossible to say more because we do not have any description of the content, only a name.

In sections 4.1–4.13 we have cast light on the complex connections in the corpus. We have identified a handful of unknown sources and some textual traditions that seem to exclude others. However, the information provided here must be the tip of an iceberg based on the rare texts that have been preserved. Many intermediary sources are missing and behind the corpus probably lay an even more complex set of dependencies and connections. Oral influences might have played a role too. Given the paucity of information, I believe, however, that the three figures illustrate the best possible picture of the connections within the corpus. To go further would entail over-speculation and baseless conclusions.

Further studies are needed to scrutinize thoroughly the following pairs of texts: Ibn Qutayba and al-Maqdisī; Bal'amī and *Nihāyat*; al-Mas'ūdī and Gardīzī; al-Mas'ūdī and al-Ṭa'ālibī; and al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Balkhī. The textual links presented in this study may or may not go beyond the stories of Bahrām Čübīn.

4.15. Conclusions

The textual evidence dealt with above is scattered and asymmetrical. Nevertheless, one thing is clear: the evidence points toward multiple sources and a complex transmission history. Nothing seems to indicate that the stories at hand were based on one original story – quite the contrary. It seems that there was a pool of material and names circulating quite freely which implies a free reworking of raw material from various sources rather than a straightforward dependency from one version to another. In general, in mediaeval Islamic context texts were fluid, not fixed, and open to considerable variation. The authors used their sources freely and edited and rewrote material as it best suited their agenda and stylistic requirements. It seems evident that many layers of influences and many sources are at work. This does not, however, prevent us from excluding some lines of

transmission and identifying some others. For example, the quartet al-Dīnawarī, al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas'ūdī cannot be based on the same earlier Arabic adaptations or Pahlavi original(s).

The *exact* contents of the Pahlavi texts on Bahrām Čūbīn is and will remain a mystery. It should be stressed that both the Middle Persian original(s) and the first Arabic adaptation(s) are irretrievably lost. The number of Middle Persian texts as well as the Arabic adaptations is unknown too (4.15.2). Any reconstruction attempt of the *original* version would be an impossible task, especially now that we have glimpses of the very complicated transmission history of the stories. All one can achieve at the most is to estimate which narrative motifs were *probably* included in the original versions. Then what characteristics did the stories of Bahrām Čūbīn have in the beginning? Keeping in mind that the number of Pahlavi originals is unknown, I suggest that the following four groups of themes are very likely to have been part of the first Pahlavi versions:

1. Five literary topoi: of legitimacy of royal power, the legendary Sasanian past, the six prophecies, the men worth a thousand men and the use of some numbers such as forty and 12,000.
2. Five of the seven narrative blocks established in the study: Introducing Bahrām Čūbīn (I), Bahrām Čūbīn fights Khāqān II (II), Revolt of Bahrām Čūbīn (IV), Bahrām Čūbīn fights Khusraw II (V) and Bahrām Čūbīn's defeat and death (VI).
3. The two remaining narrative blocks of Bahrām Čūbīn fights Khāqān III (III) and After the death of Bahrām Čūbīn (VII) probably reflect another textual tradition stemming from another Pahlavi original.
4. Narrative motifs included in all or nearly all versions (2.5), such as the following nine: External forces threaten Hurmuzd IV's kingdom (I/b), Hurmuzd IV chooses Bahrām as leading general for his army (I/c), Bahrām kills Khāqān II with an arrow (II/f), Bahrām revolts against Hurmuzd IV (IV/d), Hurmuzd IV is blinded and dethroned (IV/q), Maurice sends his son to help Khusraw II (V/q), Maurice gives his daughter Maryam as wife to Khusraw II (V/r), Bahrām flees to the land of the Turks (VI/a), Khusraw sends a man to plot against Bahrām (VI/i). The narrative motif of Bahrām riding a piebald horse (V/t) is widespread too.

4.15.1. Why the Bahrām Čūbīn story continued to appeal to the writers

In the analysis, we have noted that the texts show both negative and positive attitudes toward Bahrām Čūbīn. However, none of the versions depict Bahrām's actions positively after the revolt (3.6). The versatility and ambiguity of the character could be one reason why Bahrām remained so

popular many centuries after his death. Bahrām does not yield to any simple characterization: he is at once a national hero, praised by Hurmuzd IV, a gifted and valiant general, a master archer and adventurer, but also a rebellious usurper and victim of Hurmuzd IV and his vizier's machinations. The story could have been used over and over again in different contexts. Dramatically, the story itself is appealing but there are other reasons too.

First, the legitimacy of royal power and its definition was probably the stories' leitmotif. It is clear that when the stories were first written in the Sasanian cultural milieu, it is unimaginable that royal legitimacy and Bahrām as a false pretender went unnoticed. As a rebel and usurper, Bahrām Čübīn could have been considered an enemy of the state deserving a *damnatio memoriae*. Obviously, this was not the case. Instead, the story itself and its moral content were considered more appealing than the protagonist's reprehensible acts. As from the beginning the story had a moral message, I believe that the moral content continued to be important in the Islamic milieu too, but not Bahrām Čübīn *per se*. Albeit the historical context had changed and the Sasanian dynasty disappeared many centuries prior to the authors' time, an old story can be put to a new use: even centuries later there are still kings and rebels and the moral message remains the same.

Second, one has to take into account another important undercurrent of the texts. One way or another, the authors transmitted the pre-Islamic Persian culture, its place and *raison d'être* in Islamic historiography. As the Sasanians and the three other classes of kings (Ašghaniyans, Kayanids Pišdadiyans) were part of the project to include Persian material in the Islamic historiography (1.4), the individual kings and stories associated with them probably had small importance in the larger picture. This implies that it was unlikely that the writers deemed Bahrām Čübīn's character important, perhaps with the exception of Bal'amī whose patron was thought to be related to Bahrām Čübīn (1.6.6). The memory of the Sasanians (Bahrām included) was instrumentalized to convey the idea of the continuous Persian identity in the past. For the authors in the corpus, the stories of Bahrām Čübīn were one component in a larger project to 'promote' Persian culture to a wider audience. Apparently, a story of less importance allows more editorial freedom which might result in discrepancies and variance. The story itself and its moral message continued to be important whereas its protagonist was not.

4.15.2. Final conclusions

In the above sections 4.1–4.13 we have revealed links between the texts. Now we should return to the research questions 'What can explain the diversity of the stories?' and 'How were the stories

of Bahrām Čübīn transmitted?’ (2.2) In sections 4.15.1 and 4.15.2 we will answer the remaining research questions. One can identify at least thirteen factors to explain the divergences of Bahrām Čübīn stories in Arabic and Persian recensions:

1. Multiple Pahlavi versions of Bahrām Čübīn stories.
2. Multiple Arabic translations of the Pahlavi originals.
3. Pahlavi eschatological writings or three *vaticinia ex eventu* in which Bahrām is the protagonist.
4. Independent book on Bahrām Čübīn vs. embedded stories.
5. Literary topoi.
6. Unauthored collections or “source books” (*majmū’āt*).
7. The influence of *Adab* on historiography (longer narratives and critical approaches to texts).
8. Bahrām Čübīn stories as non-religious and non-scientific text.
9. Onomatomania.
10. Accretion of the motifs in the story over time.
11. Connections and borrowings within the corpus.
12. Poor modern editions.
13. Oral influences.

First point. There are many implicit pieces of evidence that suggest a multitude of Pahlavi texts. First, the textual tradition of al-Dīnawarī and *Nihāyat* with their distinct nomenclature and the anti-Sasanian passages probably reflect one Pahlavi version (3.4.6). There might have been two strains of texts: those that admired Bahrām Čübīn and looked down on the Sasanians and those that vilified Bahrām and were pro-Sasanian.

Second, the identity and contents of the two known Arabic titles of the Bahrām Čübīn story, *K. Bahrām Šūbīn* and *K. Mufrad fī Akhbār Bahrām Jūbīn*, also remain a mystery although the Bal’āmī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* trio is likely to contain the kernel of the latter. The two titles certainly reflect translations from Pahlavi to Arabic, but many questions arise: Do they reflect two different Pahlavi originals? Given the general variability of the stories, a positive answer is likely.

Third, the fourteen texts seem to stem from nine or more different source texts, i.e., Arabic adaptations of the Pahlavi originals (4.14). The popularity of the story in Arabic and Persian recensions suggests that the extant versions are based on many sources. If the variance in the

contents can be reduced to many Arabic adaptations, it too can go back to many Pahlavi texts. If it is plausible to suggest that many Arabic translations circulated, why would it not be possible to suggest that there were many Pahlavi originals? Cereti notes that the religious Pahlavi literature continued to be copied and written in Iran after the Arab invasion within the dwindling circles of Zoroastrian believers (2009). We have many pieces of evidence that the Zoroastrian communities were still active during the 9th and early 10th centuries and literary activity was flourishing. For instance, excerpts and compilations of Avesta texts were written in Middle Persian (Bosworth, 1977: 105). Why would it not be possible that non-religious texts were copied too before and after the Muslim conquests? As the inconsistency of the corpus can possibly derive from personal input of the writers – rewriting, adding and abridging – it can as well be traced to varied Pahlavi versions which have led to a *mélange* of Arabic translations on which the extant versions are based.

Fourth, the fact that narrative blocks III and VII are either completely absent or patchily covered in some texts (Appendix A)¹²⁹ certainly reflects the earlier Arabic adaptations and sources for the extant texts but also Pahlavi originals. This cannot be attributed to rewriting and editing. In other words, the inclusion of narrative blocks III and VII in some texts and their absence in others reflect two different Pahlavi textual traditions.

Fifth, the distribution of the narrative motifs provides important information (chart 4, p. 83–4). The number of the most common narrative motifs is rather small: only five narrative motifs are shared by fourteen texts, four narrative motifs by thirteen texts, five narrative motifs by twelve texts and so forth. At the other end of the scale, less frequent narrative motifs are significantly more numerous: thirteen narrative motifs are shared by five texts, twenty-one narrative motifs by four texts, thirteen narrative motifs by three texts and so forth. Less frequent narrative motifs prevail in number, which gives the impression of multiple and scattered source texts. The variety of detailed Bahrām Čūbīn accounts suggests written records at odds with one another, possibly supported by oral transmission.

The Second point is a sequel to the first point. There is no need to repeat all that was said above. The pivotal points are: al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Mas‘ūdī seem to be based on seven or more earlier texts. The analysis of the Bal‘amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* trio shows that the fourteen texts can be divided into two large groups that are reducible to many earlier texts. Long texts of the corpus

¹²⁹ For example, Ibn Qutayba, al-Maḡdisī and *Mujmal* do not mention Khāqān III at all and the events after Bahrām Čūbīn’s death are absent in the texts of Ibn Qutayba, al-Maḡdisī and Gardīzī and very scarcely presented in al-Mas‘ūdī and *Mujmal*.

such as Firdawsī and *Nihāyat*, but also al-Ṭabarī (see fig. 1, p. 194), definitely contain multiple sources and layers.

Regarding al-Masʿūdī and *K. mufrad fī akhbār Bahrām Jūbīn*, my conclusion is that he did not use the book as a source for his version of the Bahrām Čübīn story: he merely refers to the book and describes its contents superficially (MS I: 318). Furthermore, as discussed above, the identity of the books *K. Bahrām Šūbīn* (Ibn al-Nadīm, 1872: 305) and *K. mufrad fī akhbār Bahrām Jūbīn* (MS I: 318) remains somewhat unclear. As all the evidence points toward a plurality of sources, both Pahlavi and Arabic, and as the extant texts are based on nine or more earlier Arabic adaptations (fig. 4, pp. 211–2), I suggest that *K. Bahrām Šūbīn* and *K. mufrad fī akhbār Bahrām Jūbīn* were completely different books that contained different stories of Bahrām Čübīn.

The **third point** adds to the discussion of multiple Pahlavi texts. As Czeplédy has pointed out, *Zand ī Vahman Yasn*, *Jāmāsp-nāmag*, *Ayātkār ī Žāmāspīk* and *Bundahišn* contain many motifs and details that seem to refer unequivocally to the story of Bahrām Čübīn (1958: 32–40). In our corpus, these details include the onslaught of foreign nations (3.1.1), deaf and blind king (3.2.11), Afrāsiyāb’s treasures (3.2.4.5) and the overall legitimist motif (3.5), all widespread themes in the corpus. It seems that both religious and secular texts on Bahrām Čübīn were circulating. Bahrām’s deeds and adventures inspired both religious and secular circles of the late Sasanian dynasty.

Fourth point. It is important to note that in the corpus the story of Bahrām Čübīn is always contextualized within the Sasanian material (1.4). Even though it seems clear that the stories circulated first as independent “books” or texts, all the Arabic and Persian texts in which the traces of the story have been preserved embedded the story as part of the paradigmatic Persian history and the Sasanian material. Apart from the references of al-Masʿūdī and Ibn al-Nadīm, there is no textual evidence that the story was transmitted as a separate book. Perhaps the writers consulted the book(s) about Bahrām Čübīn while they still circulated independently, but they did not pass it on as a separate book.

This procedure implies considerable editing and rewriting. Often it is hard to see to what extent different versions are edited, shortened or modified because we do not have the source texts. It is possible that some of the writers had many Bahrām Čübīn accounts at their disposal and harmonized their content. Therefore, they might have rewritten the story partly by using multiple stories to produce a single version of the story.

Fifth point. Many literary topoi emerge in the stories: for instance, the men worth a thousand men (V/s)¹³⁰ and the use of certain numbers such as forty and 12,000 (3.1.5, 3.1.6). Another integral topos is the prophecies, which, as far as I know, have not been discussed previously in the scholarship of Arabic and Persian historiography. At least six prophecies or astrological predictions appear which are all related to the Bal'amī-Firdawsī-*Nihāyat* group (3.5.9, 4.4). The legendary Sasanian past is also evoked many times to serve as an example or argument in the current situation: Bahrām Čübīn refers to the examples of Rustam, Jūdarz and others when he justifies the choice of 12,000 men for his army (3.1.6); legendary Turanian kings such as Afrāsiyāb, Luhrāsp and others are mentioned after Bahrām's battle against Khāqān III to underline the long history of animosity between Iran and Turan (3.2.4.5); Bahrām's soldiers refer to the first Sasanian king Ardašīr and his vizier to justify their discontent and rebellion against Hurmuzd IV (3.2.8); Bahrām refers to the legend of Sūkhṛā to justify his position and royal aspirations (3.5.4).

On a more general level, two bigger motifs can be seen at play: legitimacy of the ruler (3.5; Czeglédy, 1958: 32–43; Rubin, 2004: 254–73) and the theme of the pious ruler versus heretic rebellion. According to Meisami, these exemplary figures not only provide ethical models, but also serve political and polemical ends (1999: 286). Another topic discussed by Meisami is the idea of state, *dawla*, opposed to *fitna*, or civil strife, and *fatra*, or period of disorder. According to her, *dawla* (the Sasanian state in the context of the Bahrām Čübīn story) conveys the meanings of political authority and established order whereas *fatra* signifies incapacity to maintain order, administrative incompetence and official disorder and *fitna* signifies rebellion, treachery and the machinations of heretics. In other words, the legitimacy of rule is a moral concept (Meisami, 1999: 281–2). The stories of Bahrām Čübīn epitomize this binary division. The Sasanian state represents the *dawla* and Bahrām's rebellion the *fitna*.

Sixth point. Savant has suggested that unauthored collections or “source books” (*majmū'āt*), could have served as sources for Persian material (1.7). These collections contained topically related material or different books by the same author. She argues that phrases such as “the Persians say” or “the Persians claim”, which are manifold in the corpus, could refer to these collections instead of or as well as oral sources (2014: 123–5). If this theory is correct, it would give another meaning to the works named *siyar* (*kutub siyar*, *kutub siyar al-'ajam*, *kitāb-i akhbār-i 'ajam*, etc.), traditionally

¹³⁰ Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam also mentions men worth a thousand men in his *Futūḥ Miṣr* (1922: 61). See also Noth 1994: 169–170.

seen to be recensions of the *Khwadāynāmag* translated by Ibn al-Muqaffa' (MJ: 2; Yarshater, 1983: 359–61; Hämeen-Anttila, 2018 a: 89–99).

Given the examples provided by Savant and my own understanding of Arabic and Persian texts containing Persian material where the above-mentioned locutions and generic book titles are recurrent, I found Savant's theory very convincing. The unknown Arabic adaptations (see Fig. 1 & 4) could be explained by these collections or "source books".

Seventh point. Many, if not all, authors edited, rewrote and abbreviated their accounts to some extent. In the al-Dīnawarī–al-Ya'qūbī–al-Ṭabarī–al-Mas'ūdī quartet, only al-Dīnawarī seems to present an uninterrupted narrative (4.3.8). Ibn al-Aṭīr's story in *K. al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rikh* is a shortened version of al-Ṭabarī. The versions of Ibn Qutayba, al-Maqdisī, Ibn al-Balkhī, Gardīzī and *Mujmal* are all shortened texts because many episodes are presented allusively in them. The growing influence of *Adab* might explain the changes. All of the salient features of *Adab* influence, such as a more comparative approach to historical reports, a more critical attitude toward histories of foreign nations, the dropping of *isnāds*, changes in styles and longer narratives (Khalidi, 1994: 124–9), are present in the corpus (1.7).

Admitting this does not, however, mean that all the authors rewrote the story from the beginning to the end. As there is no evidence that Bahrām Čūbīn as a character was more significant to the authors than any other figure of Iranian national history (Gayūmart, Bahrām Gūr, or some other), these changes were probably motivated by factors such as fitting the story into their continuous narratives of the Sasanian kings or their personal stylistic requirements. I do not see any reason why they would have wasted an excessive amount of energy to rewrite the story completely, add nomenclature or other details, and change the plot. Regardless of the changes, the original sources can be discerned underneath to some extent.

Editing and rewriting had, however, one important consequence: the main characteristics of the source texts became faded and blurred. In this process textual connections, verbatim or other, became even more difficult to identify.

Eighth point. Transmitting or 'translating' historical and literary texts is free from the conditions of religious ideas or scientific texts which often require faithful and exact translation. The Bahrām Čūbīn story being a non-religious and non-scientific text – a good piece of tragic literature – gave more freedom to the translators and later transmitters to compose a readable adaptation, fitted to the tastes of the readers (or listeners).

Ninth point. The irregularity in nomenclature can be explained in part by what Noth calls “onomatomania” (1994: 126–8). Divergent names, e.g., the man who introduces Mihrān-Sitād to Hurmuzd IV (3.1.2), Hurmuzd IV’s vizier (3.2.5), Khāqān IV’s brothers (3.4.1, 3.4.5) and the monster against whom Bahrām fights (3.4.2) might have resulted from the writers need to invent names for characters without name or to replace badly written names in their source manuscripts with new ones. The authors invented new names and places and added them to their narratives.

Tenth point. In the corpus, there is no general tendency for the stories of Bahrām Čübīn to accumulate details over time. Over time the stories did not grow systematically in details. Some authors added material and others omitted it. It seems that the writers worked independently. In their work, they did not follow any recognizable pattern or pre-set criteria.

The accounts such as Firdawsī’s *Šāhnāma*, *Nihāyat*, *al-Akhhbār al-Ṭiwāl* and al-Ṭabarī’s *Ta’rīkh* certainly included material from many source texts but some others such as Gardīzī and Ibn Balkhī clearly shortened their accounts.

Eleventh point. The complex set of links and connections within the corpus are discussed in chapters 4.1–4.13 and shown in Figures 1–4. Because many intermediary sources either missing or uncertain, a more detailed mapping of the transmission is difficult.

Twelfth point. Some of the modern editions, in particular Rawšan’s edition of Bal’amī and Dānišpažūh’s edition of *Nihāyat* are of poor quality. Some textual variants of Bal’amī’s *Ta’rīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī* based on different manuscripts according to Rawšan’s edition (1.6.6, 3.2.4.2, 3.5.1) give the impression of a fluctuant text in the process of redaction. Taking into account the vast number of manuscripts of Bal’amī’s text, one can assume that the Bahrām Čübīn story had considerable variation within the manuscript tradition of Bal’amī, let alone the other authors and their texts. A better edition of both Bal’amī and *Nihāyat* would help us ascertain the connections between the two.

Thirteenth point. I believe that oral circulation of Bahrām Čübīn stories must have influenced their contents. The orality-literacy continuum is discussed in section 1.2.2. I have stated that in the mediaeval world, the boundaries between literary and oral presentation were flexible and that oral transmission played a central role. In early Islamic culture, trustworthy men and storytellers (*quṣṣāṣ*) passed on the information of pious men and important religious events. The information was passed through recitations (*qirā’a*) and aural lectures (*samā’*, *majālis*). In Persia, *Gōsān* and *Naqqālī* traditions played a role before and possibly after the Arab invasions. We have evidence that Persian

Islamic historians recited their works at courts and to their patrons. Again, the absence of written evidence does not mean that an oral tradition was not functioning.

Studying the stories of Bahrām Čübīn has provided us interesting insights into the ways of transmission of Arabic and Persian texts as well as into the evolution of the story itself. I hope that this study has helped to identify fruitful lines of enquiry for further studies.

Appendices

A. Narrative motifs

Narrative block I: Introducing Bahrām Čübīn

- Mihrān-Sitād tells an anecdote of Hurmuzd IV's mother at the court of Khāqān I
- External forces threaten Hurmuzd IV's kingdom
- Hurmuzd IV chooses Bahrām as leading general for his army
- Bahrām and 12 000 men
- Hurmuzd IV discusses Bahrām's trustworthiness with his vizier.
- Hurmuzd IV sends a man after Bahrām
- Bahrām piercing sheep heads with his sword
- Hurmuzd IV asks Bahrām to return, but he refuses
- Bahrām's soldier assaults a woman

	a (5)	b (14)	c (14)	d (10)	e (4)	f (4)	g (4)	h (4)	i (4)
QT (3)	-	(QT: 664) ¹³¹	(QT: 664) ¹³²	QT: 664	-	-	-	-	-
DN (3)	-	DN: 81	DN: 81–2	DN: 82	-	-	-	-	-
YQ (6)	YQ: 188	YQ: 188	YQ: 188	YQ: 188	YQ: 188	-	-	YQ: 188	-
ṬB (3)	-	ṬB I: 991	ṬB I: 992	ṬB I: 992	-	-	-	-	-
MS (3)	-	MS I: 312	MS I: 312	MS I: 313	-	-	-	-	-
BL (9)	BL II: 758, 764–6	BL II: 760–1	BL II: 762, 764, 766, 1011	BL II: 766, 1011	BL II: 768	BL II: 767	BL II: 767	BL II: 767–8	BL II: 768
MQ (2)	-	MQ III: 169	MQ III: 169	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD (9)	FD VII: 493–8	FD VII: 487–93	FD VII: 501–2	FD VII: 502–6	FD VII: 508–10	FD VII: 510	FD VII: 510–11	FD VII: 511–12	FD VII: 512–13
ṬB (6)	-	ṬB: 642	ṬB: 643	ṬB: 643	-	ṬB: 644	ṬB: 644	-	ṬB: 645
NH (9)	NH: 351–2	NH: 350–1	NH: 352	NH: 353	NH: 354–5	NH: 354	NH: 354	NH: 354	NH: 355
GD (2)	-	GD: 98	GD: 98	-	-	-	-	-	-
BKh (2)	-	BKh: 98	BKh: 98	-	-	-	-	-	-
MJ (3)	MJ: 76–7	MJ: 76	MJ: 76	-	-	-	-	-	-
AT (3)	-	AT: 364	AT: 364	AT: 364	-	-	-	-	-

Narrative block II: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khāqān II

- Hurmuzd IV sends a man to Khāqān II

¹³¹ In Ibn Qutayba's account, Hurmuzd IV's kingdom is threatened only by Khāqān II.

¹³² Hurmuzd IV sends Bahrām Čübīn to Khāqān II (*fa-ba'aṭa ilay-hi bahrām šūbīnat*), but the text does not precisely mention Hurmuzd IV appointing him.

- b) Letter from Khāqān II to Hurmuzd IV
- c) Exchanging messages between Khāqān II and Bahrām
- d) Bahrām has a dream
- e) Bahrām makes war against Khāqān II
- f) Bahrām kills Khāqān II with an arrow
- g) Bahrām captures and kills a Turanian magician

	a (5)	b (4)	c (9)	d (3)	e (12)	f (13)	g (4)
QT (2)	-	-	-	-	QT: 664	QT: 664	-
DN (4)	DN: 83	-	DN: 83	-	DN: 83–4	DN: 84	-
YQ (5)	YQ: 188	-	YQ: 188–9	-	YQ: 189	YQ: 189	YQ: 189
TB (4)	-	TB I: 991	TB I: 992	-	TB I: 992–3	TB I: 992	-
MS (3)	-	-	(MS I: 313) ¹³³	-	MS I: 313	MS I: 313	-
BL (6)	BL II: 768	-	BL II: 768–9	BL II: 769–70	BL II: 770–1, 1011–12	BL II: 770–1	BL II: 771
MQ (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD (7)	FD VII: 514–18	FD VII: 488	FD VII: 518–21, 523–30	FD VII: 530–1	FD VII: 531–8	FD VII: 538–40	FD VII: 541–3
TB (3)	-	-	TB: 645–6	-	TB: 646–8	TB: 647	-
NH (6)	NH: 355–6	-	NH: 355–6	NH: 356	NH: 356	NH: 357	NH: 357
GD (2)	-	-	-	-	GD: 98	GD: 98	-
BKh (4)	-	BKh: 98	BKh: 98	-	BKh: 98	BKh: 98	-
MJ (1)	-	-	-	-	-	MJ: 77	-
AT (3)	-	AT: 364	-	-	AT: 364	AT: 364	-

Narrative block III: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khāqān III

- a) Bahrām Čübīn inspects Khāqān III's troops before the fight
- b) Khāqān III inspects Bahrām's troops before the fight
- c) Bahrām makes war against Khāqān III
- d) Surprise attack in the garden by Khāqān III
- e) Exchange of words between Bahrām and Khāqān III
- f) Khāqān III entrenches himself in a castle
- g) Khāqān III asks for asylum from Hurmuzd IV
- h) A reference to the legendary Turanian kings
- i) Khāqān III and Hurmuzd IV meet outside the royal palace
- j) Hurmuzd IV praises Bahrām for his victories or sends him gifts
- k) A conflict between Bahrām and Khāqān III

¹³³ Al-Mas'ūdī's text suggests that Bahrām Čübīn had with him affairs (*khuṭūb*) and exchanges of messages (*murāsīlāt*) which are to be used for incitement, intimidation and trickery in the war (*min targhīb wa-tarhīb wa-ḥiyāl fī al-ḥarb*). Exchanging messages between Khāqān II and Bahrām is not explicitly mentioned, but the motif remains.

	a (4)	b (3)	c (10)	d (2)	e (3)	f (8)	g (6)	h (4)	i (5)	j (5)	k (1)
QT (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DN (4)	-	-	DN: 84	-	-	-	DN: 84	-	DN: 84	DN: 84	-
YQ (3)	-	-	YQ: 189	-	-	YQ: 189	YQ: 189	-	-	-	-
TB (3)	-	-	TB I: 993	-	-	TB I: 993	-	-	-	TB I: 993	-
MS (3)	-	-	MS I: 313	-	-	MS I: 313	-	MS I: 313	-	-	-
BL (6)	BL II: 772	-	BL II: 772, 1012	-	BL II: 772	BL II: 772	BL II: 772, 1012	-	BL II: 773, 1012	-	-
MQ (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD (11)	FD VII: 552	FD VII: 552–3	FD VII: 553–5	FD VII: 553–4	FD VII: 555–7	FD VII: 557–61	FD VII: 562–5	FD VII: 571–2	FD VII: 573–5	FD VII: 550–1	FD VII: 565–71
TB (10)	TB: 650–1	TB: 651	TB: 653	TB: 652	TB: 653	TB: 653–4	TB: 654	TB: 655	TB: 655–6	TB: 649	-
NH (6)	NH: 358	NH: 358	NH: 357–8	-	-	NH: 358	NH: 358	-	NH: 359	-	-
GD (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	GD: 98–99	-	-	-
BKh (2)	-	-	BKh: 98	-	-	-	-	-	-	BKh: 99	-
MJ (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
AT (2)	-	-	AT: 364	-	-	AT: 364	-	-	-	-	-

Narrative block IV: Revolt of Bahrām Čübīn

- Khāqān III denounces Bahrām's actions to Hurmuzd IV
- Hurmuzd IV's vizier intrigues against Bahrām
- Hurmuzd IV sends insulting gifts to Bahrām
- Bahrām revolts against Hurmuzd IV
- Historical account cited by Bahrām's men
- Hunting wild ass episode
- Bahrām ascends the throne
- Khurrād-Burzīn and the scribe (often Yazdak) flee
- Khurrād-Burzīn informs Hurmuzd IV about Bahrām's actions
- Bahrām sends insulting gifts to Hurmuzd IV
- Hurmuzd IV sends the insulting gifts back to Bahrām
- Bahrām discusses the legitimacy of kingship with his men
- Bahrām Čübīn deems Khusraw II a better ruler than Hurmuzd IV
- Bahrām mints coins in the name of Khusraw II
- Khusraw II flees to Azerbaijan

p) Hurmuzd IV sends his vizier to Bahrām to apologize

q) Hurmuzd IV is blinded and dethroned

	a (3)	b (7)	c (6)	d (14)	e (3)	f (3)	g (9)	h (4)
QT (1)	-	-	-	QT: 664	-	-	-	-
DN (5)	-	DN: 85	DN: 85	DN: 86	DN: 85	-	-	DN: 86
YQ (2)	YQ: 189	-	-	YQ: 190	-	-	-	-
TB (2)	-	-	-	TB I: 993	-	-	TB I: 999	-
MS (3)	-	MS I: 313	-	MS I: 313	-	-	MS I: 316	-
BL (6)	-	BL II: 774, 1013	BL II: 774, 1013	BL II: 775, 1013	-	BL II: 776–7, 1014	BL II: 786, 789	BL II: 776
MQ (1)	-	-	-	MQ III: 169	-	-	-	-
FD (8)	FD VII: 577	FD VII: 576–7	FD VII: 580–2	FD VII: 582–3, 592–4	FD VII: 583	FD VII: 584–91	FD VII: 587–9	FD VII: 588–9
TB (5)	TB: 657	(TB: 657) ¹³⁴	TB: 657	TB: 658–9, 660	-	-	TB: 669	-
NH (7)	-	NH: 359	NH: 359	NH: 360	NH: 360	NH: 360–1	NH: 370–1	NH: 360–1
GD (3)	-	GD: 99	GD: 99	GD: 99	-	-	-	-
BKh (2)	-	-	-	BKh: 99	-	-	BKh: 102	-
MJ (2)	-	-	-	MJ: 77	-	-	MJ: 77	-
AT (2)	-	-	-	AT: 365	-	-	AT: 367	-

	i (4)	j (4)	k (4)	l (3)	m (6)	n (8)	o (12)	p (7)	q (13)
QT (2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	QT: 664	-	QT: 664
DN (6)	DN: 86	-	-	DN: 94	-	DN: 86	DN: 91, 95, 86	DN: 86–7	DN: 87–8
YQ (6)	-	YQ: 190	YQ: 190	-	-	YQ: 190	YQ: 190–1	YQ: 190	YQ: 190
TB (4)	-	-	-	-	TB I: 993	-	TB I: 993–4	(TB I: 995) ¹³⁵	TB I: 993
MS (3)	-	-	-	-	-	MS I: 313	MS I: 313, 317	-	MS I: 314
BL (9)	BL II: 777	BL II: 775	BL II: 775	BL II: 778, 789	BL II: 777, 1013	BL II: 777–8, 835, 1013	BL II: 778, 790, 835, 1013	BL II: 779–81, 1014	BL II: 781, 1014
MQ (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	MQ III: 169
FD (9)	FD VII: 590–2	FD VII: 592	FD VII: 592	FD VII: 594–607	FD VII: 610	FD VII: 607–611	FD VII: 613	FD VII: 617–23	FD VII: 625–9
TB (4)	-	-	-	-	TB: 659	TB: 659	TB: 660	-	TB: 660–1
NH (7)	NH: 361	NH: 361	NH: 361	-	-	NH: 361	NH: 361	NH: 361–3	NH: 363
GD (1)	-	-	-	-	GD: 99	-	-	-	-
BKh (3)	-	-	-	-	-	-	BKh: 99	(BKh: 99) ¹³⁶	BKh: 99

¹³⁴ A denouncing sentence which in other versions is uttered by Hurmuzd IV's vizier is found in al-Ṭa'ālibī's text, but the vizier is not mentioned. Instead, the expression is ambiguous (*wa-qāla ba'du-hum*) (see 3.3.5).

¹³⁵ According to al-Ṭabarī's text, a man called Ādhīn-Jušnas was killed after being sent to fight Bahrām Čūbīn. In another version the vizier who, in the same narrative context, is sent to apologize, bears a similar name (see 3.3.4).

¹³⁶ In Ibn al-Balkhī's text, Hurmuzd IV sends a powerful general (*iṣfahbad-i buzurg*), not the vizier, to fight Bahrām Čūbīn. However, the context is the same as in the other versions where the vizier appears.

MJ (3)	-	-	-	-	-	MJ: 77	MJ: 77	-	MJ: 77
AT (3)	-	-	-	-	AT: 365	-	AT: 365, 366	-	AT: 365

Narrative block V: Bahrām Čübīn fights Khusraw II

- a) Khusraw II meets Hurmuzd IV after his dethroning
- b) Hurmuzd IV makes requests to Khusraw II
- c) Khusraw II sends one of his generals to inspect Bahrām's troops
- d) Bahrām and Khusraw II meet at the Nahrawān River
- e) Exchange of words (insults) between Bahrām and Khusraw II
- f) Bahrām and Khusraw II fight for the first time (Khusraw II is defeated)
- g) Khusraw II shoots an arrow at the horse of Bahrām Čübīn
- h) Hurmuzd IV advises Khusraw II to seek help from Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines
- i) Hurmuzd IV is killed by Bistām and Bindūy
- j) Bahrām Siyāwuš chases Khusraw II into a monastery
- k) Bahrām Siyāwuš and Bindūy plan the assassination of Bahrām Čübīn
- l) Assassination attempt of Bahrām on the polo field
- m) Khusraw II writes to Maurice or otherwise seeks help from him
- n) The Arabs help Khusraw II on his way to Byzantium
- o) Prophecy of a Christian monk
- p) Maurice discusses the situation at his court
- q) Maurice sends his son, a general or an army to help Khusraw II
- r) Maurice gives his daughter Maryam as wife to Khusraw II
- s) Maurice sends "men worth a thousand men" to help Khusraw II
- t) Bahrām Čübīn rides a piebald horse
- u) John Mystacon helps Khusraw II
- v) Khusraw II wears a garment with Christian symbols on it
- w) Bahrām and Khusraw II fight for the second time (Bahrām is defeated)
- x) Khusraw II's miraculous escape
- y) After the main battle Khusraw II sends a smaller detachment to fight Bahrām Čübīn
- z) Bahrām Čübīn gives his men a free choice to abandon his troops and 20 000 men leave
- aa) Khusraw II and Bindūy offer protection to the men of Bahrām after their defeat

	a (11)	b (8)	c (2)	d (12)	e (9)	f (10)	g (4)	h (10)	i (12)
QT (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DN (9)	DN: 88	DN: 88	DN: 89	DN: 89	DN: 89–90	DN: 90	DN: 90	DN: 91	DN: 91
YQ (4)	YQ: 191	-	-	YQ: 191	YQ: 191	-	-	-	YQ: 191
ṬB (7)	ṬB I: 996	ṬB I: 996	-	ṬB I: 993, 997	ṬB I: 993, 997	ṬB I: 994	-	ṬB I: 994, 998	ṬB I: 998
MS (6)	MS I: 314	-	-	MS I: 314	MS I: 314	MS I: 314	-	MS I: 315	MS I: 316

BL (8)	BL II: 762, 785	BL II: 762	-	(BL II: 783) ¹³⁷	BL II: 783–4	BL II: 784–5	BL II: 785	BL II: 785	BL II: 786
MQ (2)	-	-	-	MQ III: 169	-	MQ III: 169	-	-	-
FD (9)	FD VIII: 3–7	FD VIII: 3–7	FD VIII: 8–9	FD VIII: 8, 11	FD VIII: 16–35	FD VIII: 38–46	FD VIII: 45–6	FD VIII: 47–8	FD VIII: 51
TB (6)	TB: 662	TB: 662	-	TB: 663	TB: 663–5	TB: 665	-	-	TB: 666
NH (8)	NH: 364	NH: 364	-	(NH: 365) ¹³	NH: 365–6	NH: 365–6	NH: 366	NH: 366	NH: 367
GD (4)	GD: 99	-	-	-	-	GD: 99	-	GD: 100	GD: 100
BKh (6)	BKh: 99	BKh: 99–100	-	BKh: 100	BKh: 100	-	-	BKh: 100	BKh: 100
MJ (3)	-	-	-	MJ: 77	-	-	-	(MJ: 77) ¹³⁸	MJ: 77
AT (6)	AT: 366–7	AT: 367	-	AT: 367	-	AT: 367	-	AT: 367	AT: 367

	j (10)	k (7)	l (5)	m (9)	n (7)	o (3)	p (5)	q (13)	r (14)
QT (3)	-	-	-	QT: 664	-	-	-	QT: 664	QT: 664
DN (8)	DN: 91–93	DN: 94–95	DN: 95	DN: 96	DN: 95	-	DN: 96	DN: 96	DN: 96
YQ (4)	-	-	-	YQ: 191	-	-	YQ: 191	YQ: 191–2	YQ: 191
TB (6)	TB I: 999	TB I: 999	-	TB I: 994, 998–9	TB I: 998	-	-	TB I: 999	TB I: 994, 999
MS (5)	MS I: 316	-	-	MS I: 316	MS I: 314–5	-	-	MS I: 316–7	MS I: 316–7
BL (9)	BL II: 786–7, 791	BL II: 788	BL II: 788–9	BL II: 793–4	BL II: 791–2	BL II: 793	BL II: 794	BL II: 794–5, 838	BL II: 794, 838
MQ (3)	-	-	-	-	MQ III: 169	-	-	MQ III: 170	MQ III: 170
FD (9)	FD VIII: 52–59	FD VIII: 68–71	FD VIII: 71–2	FD VIII: 50, 81, 87, 102–4	FD VIII: 76–9	FD VIII: 81–5	FD VIII: 88–101, 104–5	FD VIII: 118–20	FD VIII: 115–8
TB (3)	TB: 666–8	-	-	-	-	-	-	TB: 668	TB: 668
NH (9)	NH: 367–8	NH: 369	NH: 369	NH: 373–4	NH: 371–2	NH: 372–3	NH: 374–5	NH: 375	NH: 375
GD (2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	GD: 100	GD: 100

¹³⁷ In this detail, both Bal'amī and *Nihāyat* indicate a place called Jalūlā or the plain of Jalūlā as the meeting place for Khusraw II and Bahrām Čūbīn.

¹³⁸ The text of *Mujmal* is succinct and compressed, and it does not describe the meeting of Hurmuzd IV and Khusraw II. However, the text reads that the father [Hurmuzd IV] saw it right to go to the Byzantines (*šawāb dīd pidar sūy-i rūm qašad kard*). The motif remains the same.

BKh (5)	BKh: 101	BKh: 102	-	BKh: 102	-	-	-	BKh: 102	BKh: 102
MJ (4)	MJ: 77–8	-	(MJ: 78) ¹³⁹	-	-	-	-	MJ: 78	MJ: 78
AT (3)	AT: 367	AT: 367	-	-	-	-	-	-	AT: 367

	s (8)	t (7)	u (6)	v (4)	w (12)	x (6)	y (4)	z (3)	aa (5)
QT (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DN (8)	DN: 96	DN: 97	DN: 94–6	-	DN: 97	DN: 97	DN: 98	DN: 94	DN: 98
YQ (4)	YQ: 192	YQ: 192	-	YQ: 192–3	YQ: 191	-	-	-	-
TB (5)	TB I: 999	TB I: 997	TB I: 1000	-	TB I: 1000	TB I: 1000	-	-	-
MS (1)	-	-	-	-	MS I: 317	-	-	-	-
BL (9)	BL II: 795	BL II: 795–6	BL II: 779	BL II: 801–2	BL II: 796–7	BL II: 797	BL II: 798	BL II: 790	BL II: 798
MQ (1)	-	-	-	-	MQ III: 170	-	-	-	-
FD (8)	(FD VIII: 120) ¹⁴⁰	FD VIII: 12–4, 17	FD VIII: 73–4, 139	FD VIII: 157–63	FD VIII: 135–50	FD VIII: 144–6	FD VIII: 150–1, 153–5	-	FD VIII: 149–51
TB (5)	-	TB: 663	-	-	TB: 669–70	TB: 665	TB: 672	-	TB: 670
NH (8)	NH: 375	NH: 377	NH: 370, 375–7	NH: 381–2	NH: 376–8	NH: 378	-	NH: 370	NH: 378
GD (1)	-	-	-	-	GD: 100	-	-	-	-
BKh (2)	BKh: 102	-	-	-	BKh: 102	-	-	-	-
MJ (1)	-	-	MJ: 78	-	-	-	-	-	-
AT (2)	AT: 367	-	-	-	AT: 367	-	-	-	-

Narrative block VI: Bahrām Čübīn's defeat and death

- a) Bahrām flees to Turan
- b) Description of Bahrām's journey
- c) Bahrām halts in the house of an old woman
- d) Bahrām fights Ibn Qārin
- e) Khāqān IV addresses a speech to Bahrām Čübīn
- f) Bahrām fights and kills Khāqān IV's brother (1)

¹³⁹ *Mujmal* does not indicate the assassination attempt of Bahrām Čübīn on the polo field. Instead, the killing of Bahrām Siyāwuš is mentioned and the same character is mentioned in the accounts of al-Dīnawarī, Bal'amī, Firdawsī and *Nihāyat* as the assassin.

¹⁴⁰ Instead of "men worth a thousand men", Firdawsī mentions one thousand men marching under the banner of Niyātūs (*hizār guzīda suwārān-i khanjar-guzār*).

- g) Bahrām fights a monster and rescues Khātūn II’s daughter
h) Khusraw II sends a letter to Khāqān IV
i) Khusraw II sends a man to intrigue against Bahrām
j) The man bribes Khātūn II to plot Bahrām’s death
k) A Turanian man kills Bahrām
l) Death of Bahrām occurs on the day of *Wahrām*
m) Bahrām’s last words
n) Bahrām Čübīn appoints Mardān-Sīna as leader of the army
o) Gurdiya *de facto* leads the former army of Bahrām Čübīn
p) Gurdiya rebukes Bahrām for his actions

	a (14)	b (5)	c (5)	d (3)	e (2)	f (5)	g (4)	h (2)
QT (1)	QT: 664	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DN (5)	DN: 99	DN: 99	DN: 98–9	DN: 99	-	DN: 102	-	-
YQ (2)	YQ: 193	-	-	-	-	YQ: 193	-	-
ṬB (1)	ṬB I: 1000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MS (2)	MS I: 317	-	-	-	-	-	MS I: 318	-
BL (6)	BL II: 800, 1015	BL II: 798–800	BL II: 798–9	BL II: 799	-	BL II: 804, 1015	BL II: 804, 1015	-
MQ (1)	MQ III: 170	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD (7)	FD VIII: 150–5, 167–8	FD VIII: 150–5, 167–8	FD VIII: 152–3	-	FD VIII: 169–70	FD VIII: 170–6	FD VIII: 176–84	FD VIII: 184–8
ṬB (5)	ṬB: 674	ṬB: 670, 674	ṬB: 672–4	-	ṬB: 674–5	-	-	ṬB: 683
NH (6)	NH: 380–1, 383	NH: 379–80	NH: 379	NH: 380	-	NH: 383–5	NH: 385–6	-
GD (1)	GD: 100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BKh (1)	BKh: 102	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MJ (1)	MJ: 78	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
AT (1)	AT: 367	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

	i (13)	j (9)	k (11)	l (4)	m (5)	n (4)	o (9)	p (3)
QT (1)	(QT: 664) ¹⁴¹	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

¹⁴¹ In Ibn Qutayba’s text, Khusraw II’s involvement is expressed implicitly, and no one is mentioned by name. The text reads that plotting against him continued (*fa-lam yuzal yadussu ‘alay-hi*) and trickery was employed (*wa-yuḥtāla*) until he was killed there (*hattā qutila hunāka*).

DN (7)	DN: 102	DN: 103–4	DN: 104	DN: 104	DN: 104	DN: 104	DN: 105	-
YQ (5)	YQ: 193	YQ: 193	YQ: 194	-	YQ: 194	-	YQ: 194	-
TB (5)	TB I: 1001	TB I: 1001	(TB I: 1001) ¹⁴²	-	-	-	(TB I: 1001) ¹⁴³	(TB I: 998) ¹⁴⁴
MS (3)	(MS I: 318) ¹⁴⁵	-	(MS I: 318) ¹⁴⁶	-	-	-	MS I: 318	-
BL (4)	BL II: 800, 804, 1015	BL II: 804–5, 1015	BL II: 800, 805, 1015	-	-	-	BL II: 805, 1015	-
MQ (1)	(MQ III: 170) ¹⁴⁷	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD (8)	FD VIII: 190–4	FD VIII: 194–200	FD VIII: 200–5	FD VIII: 200	FD VIII: 203–5	FD VIII: 204	FD VIII: 209–15	FD VIII: 35–8, 202–3
TB (8)	TB: 676–7	TB: 678–9	TB: 682–3	TB: 681	TB: 682–3	TB: 683	TB: 683–4	TB: 682–3
NH (7)	NH: 386	NH: 387–8	NH: 388	NH: 388	NH: 388	NH: 388	NH: 389	-
GD (1)	(GD: 100) ¹⁴⁸	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BKh (3)	BKh: 102	-	BKh: 102	-	-	-	BKh: 103	-
MJ (3)	MJ: 78	MJ: 78	MJ: 78	-	-	-	-	-
AT (2)	-	AT: 367	AT: 367–8	-	-	-	-	-

Narrative block VII: After the death of Bahrām Čübīn

- Khāqān IV laments Bahrām's death
- Khāqān IV proposes to Gurdiya
- Gurdiya and/or Mardān-Sīna flees from Turan with Bahrām's former troops
- Bahrām's former troops settle in the land of the Daylamites
- Khāqān IV sends another brother (2) to catch Gurdiya

¹⁴² In al-Ṭabarī's text, the killer is identified as a Turanian but referred to allusively (*hattā dassat li-bahrām man qatala-hu*).

¹⁴³ Here al-Ṭabarī's text is concise. Gurdiya takes a prominent role after Bahrām Čübīn's death.

¹⁴⁴ In al-Ṭabarī's account, Gurdiya rebukes Bahrām as well but the context differs from that of Firdawsī and al-Ṭa'ālībī where the admonition takes place at Bahrām's deathbed. In al-Ṭabarī's account, Gurdiya speaks to Bahrām after an exchange of insults between Bahrām and Khusraw II (V/e).

¹⁴⁵ Al-Mas'ūdī does not mention anyone in particular, but Khusraw II's involvement is expressed clearly. The text reads that Khusraw II employed stratagems (*wa-htāla abarwiz*) to kill Bahrām in the land of the Turanians (*fī qatl bahrām bi-arq al-turk*).

¹⁴⁶ Like al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī does not identify the assassin as a Turanian, but Bahrām's assassination takes place in the land of the Turanians.

¹⁴⁷ Like Ibn Qutayba's text, al-Maqdisī expresses this motif indirectly and uses a phrase which is precisely the same as in Ibn Qutayba: *fa-lam yuzal yadussu 'alay-hi hattā qutila*.

¹⁴⁸ Like Ibn Qutayba, al-Mas'ūdī and al-Maqdisī, Gardīzī omits to mention anyone by name but expresses Khusraw II's involvement. The text reads that Bahrām was killed because of Khusraw II's machinations (*bih makr-i parwiz bahrām rā halāk kardand*).

- f) Khāqān IV's brother (2) proposes to Gurdiya
- g) Gurdiya kills Khāqān IV's brother (2)
- h) Biṣṭām revolts and crowns himself
- i) Gurdiya marries Biṣṭām
- j) Biṣṭām and Khusraw II are in correspondence with each other
- k) Biṣṭām unites with the former troops of Bahrām Čūbīn
- l) Khusraw II sends three of his generals to fight Biṣṭām
- m) Khusraw II writes a letter to Gurdiya (= Kurdiya)
- n) Gurdiya writes a letter to her brother Kurdī
- o) Kurdī, Bahrām's brother, intercedes for Gurdiya
- p) Gurdiya kills Biṣṭām
- q) Gurdiya marries Khusraw II

	a (8)	b (2)	c (8)	d (2)	e (3)	f (4)	g (5)	h (4)
QT (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DN (4)	DN: 104	-	DN: 104	DN: 105	-	-	-	DN: 107
YQ (4)	YQ: 194	-	YQ: 194	-	-	YQ: 194	YQ: 194	-
ṬB (4)	ṬB I: 1001	-	ṬB I: 1001	-	-	ṬB I: 1001	ṬB I: 1001	-
MS (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BL (2)	-	-	BL II: 1015	-	-	-	-	BL II: 805
MQ (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD (6)	FD VIII: 206–7	FD VIII: 209	FD VIII: 212–4	-	FD VIII: 210, 215–8	-	FD VIII: 217–8	FD VIII: 220
ṬB (6)	ṬB: 683	-	ṬB: 684	-	ṬB: 684–5	ṬB: 685	ṬB: 686	-
NH (6)	NH: 388–9	-	NH: 389– 90	NH: 390	-	NH: 389	NH: 390	NH: 392
GD (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BKh (4)	BKh: 102	BKh: 102	BKh: 103	-	(BKh: 103) ¹⁴⁹	-	-	-
MJ (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
AT (1)	AT: 368	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

¹⁴⁹ According to Ibn al-Balkhī, Khāqān IV sends an army of 12,000 troops to pursue Gurdiya and the former partisans of Bahrām Čūbīn's army. The brother of Khāqān IV is not mentioned but the motif remains the same. Gurdiya fights, kills the commander of the Turanian army and defeats the army (BKh: 103). The commander of the army occupies the same narrative function as Khāqān IV's brother does in other texts.

	i (6)	j (2)	k (3)	l (2)	m (7)	n (2)	o (7)	p (7)	q (9)
QT (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DN (8)	DN: 107	DN: 107–8	DN: 106	DN: 108	DN: 109	-	DN: 109–110	DN: 110	DN: 110
YQ (5)	YQ: 195	-	-	-	YQ: 195	-	YQ: 195	YQ: 195	YQ: 195
ṬB (3)	-	-	-	-	-	ṬB I: 1001	ṬB I: 1001	-	ṬB I: 1001
MS (3)	-	-	-	-	MS I: 318	-	-	MS I: 318	MS I: 318
BL (4)	BL II: 805	-	-	-	BL II: 805	-	-	BL II: 805	BL II: 800, 805
MQ (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD (6)	FD VIII: 223	-	FD VIII: 222–3	-	FD VIII: 224–7	-	FD VIII: 212	FD VIII: 227–8	FD VI II: 230
ṬB (3)	-	-	-	-	-	ṬB: 686	ṬB: 686	-	ṬB: 686
NH (8)	NH: 392	NH: 391–3	NH: 392	NH: 393	NH: 394–5	-	NH: 394–6	NH: 395	NH: 396
GD (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BKh (1)	-	-	-	-	BKh: 103 ¹⁵⁰	-	-	-	-
MJ (3)	MJ: 78	-	-	-	-	-	-	MJ: 79	MJ: 79
AT (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	AT: 367	-	-

¹⁵⁰ Gurdiya writes to Khusraw II and not vice versa.

B. General index of nomenclature

In the two charts below, I have fused references of two or more sources only when the name (character or place) is exactly the same, when there are no variations in written form, and the identity of the character appears to be exactly the same.

Chart of personal names in the stories of Bahrām Čübīn

Identification and explanation	Variations in written form	Original reference	Name
<i>Ādhīn-Kuśasb</i> , member of Hurmuzd IV's court or his vizier		ṬB: 659	آذین کشسب
<i>Ādhīn-Jušnas</i> , a general of Hurmuzd IV's army		YQ: 190	آذینجشنس
<i>Ādhīn-Jušnas Jūrī</i> , vizier of Hurmuzd IV	وزیر هرمز, ازحسیس حوری, ارحسئس. ارحسیس	GD: 99	آذین جشنس جوری
<i>Ādhīn-Jušnas</i> , a man who is killed Bahrām Čübīn		ṬB I: 995	آذینجشنس
<i>Ārsnās</i> , probably corrupted form of Āriš, Aršišyāṭin, Arsī Ayyās, celebrated archer		DN: 92	آرسناس
<i>Āriš</i> , celebrated archer		FD VIII: 29, 33	آرش
<i>Āriš</i> , forefather of Bahrām Čubin, celebrated archer		GD: 98	آرش
<i>Āzād-Farūz</i> , a man to whom Hawdhah gave a letter	مکعبیر	BL II: 761–2	آزاد فروز
<i>Āndiyān</i> , a nobleman who sits with Khusraw II in a secret council		FD VIII: 9, 125, 136–7, 140, 165	آندیان
<i>Āhriman</i> , Ahriman, the principle of Evil		FD VII: 616; FD VIII: 193, 239	آهرمن
<i>Āyīn-Guśasp</i> , Hurmuzd IV's vizier, general who is sent to fight Bahrām Čübīn		FD VII: 576, 611, 616–20, 622–3; FD VIII: 36	آیین گشسب
<i>Abraḳha</i> , wife of Kurdī, brother of Bahrām Čübīn		YQ: 195	ابرخه
<i>Abarsām wazīr</i> , Abarsām the vizier		NH: 360	ابرسام وزیر
<i>Abarwīz</i> , Khusraw II	ابرویز بن هرمز, کسری	QT: 664	ابرویز
<i>Abarwīz</i> , Khusraw II	کسری ابرويز	MS I: 313–8	ابرویز
<i>Abarwīz</i> , Khusraw II	کسری ابرويز, کسری ابرويز بن هرمز بن کسری أنوشروان	ṬB I: 993–1001	ابرویز
<i>Abarwīz</i> , Khusraw II	کسری ابرويز بن هرمز	AT: 365–8	ابرویز

<i>Abarwīz</i> , Khusraw II	كسرى ابرويز بن الملك, كسرى, الملك, كسرى, ابن سابور بن خرينداد	DN: 86, 88–100, 102–3, 105–9	ابرويز
<i>Abarwīz</i> , Khusraw II	كسرى ابرويز بن هرمزد, كسرى بن الملك, كسرى ابرويز, يا بنى, ابن هرمزد, كسرى, كسرى بن هرمزد, ملك فارس, ابن اخيك كسرى بن هرمزد	NH: 361, 363–82, 386–7, 389–96	ابرويز
<i>Abarwīz</i> , Khusraw II	كسرى ابرويز, كسرى, شاهنشاه ابرويز	TB: 658–70, 672–9, 686–7	ابرويز
<i>Abarwīz b. Hurmuz</i> , Khusraw II	ملك ابرويز	MQ III: 169–70	ابرويز بن هرمز
<i>Ibn Abarkān</i> , a man in Ray to whom Khusraw II writes		NH: 391	ابن ابركان
<i>Ibn ukhtī Kīsrā</i> , son of the sister of Khusraw II		DN: 93	ابن اختي كسرى
<i>Ibn Sābūr b. Khurbundād</i> , father of Bīṣṭām		DN: 107	ابن سابور بن خرينداد
<i>Ibn ‘amm</i> , a cousin of Yazdān Jušnas		DN: 87; NH: 362	ابن عم
<i>Ibn Qārīn</i> , son of Qārīn		DN: 99; NH: 380	ابن قارن
<i>Ibna ukht Bahrām Jūbīn</i> , Bahrām Čūbīn’s niece and Bahrām Siyāwušān’s wife		NH: 369	ابنة اخت بهرام جوبين
<i>Ibna Khātūn</i> , daughter of Khātūn whom Bahrām Čūbīn rescues	الجارية	NH: 385–6	ابنة خاتون
<i>Ibna Khāqān</i> , daughter of Khāqān IV, king of the Turanians		MS I: 318	ابنة خاقان
<i>Ibna Khāqān al-Akbar</i> , Hurmuzd IV’s mother, daughter of Khāqān I		AT: 364	ابنة خاقان الأكبر
<i>Ibna Khāqān malik al-turk</i> , Hurmuzd IV’s mother, daughter of Khāqān I	بنت خاقان ملك الترك	MS I: 312, 318	ابنة خاقان ملك الترك
<i>Ibna Malik al-Rūm</i> , daughter of Maurice who was given in marriage to Khusraw II		YQ: 191–2	ابنة ملك الروم
<i>Ukht Ādhīn-Jušnas</i> , sister of Ādhīn-Jušnas who writes to Khusraw II		TB I: 995	اخت أدنيجشنس
<i>Arjāsp</i> , the grandson of Afrāsiāb, a Turanian champion.		FD VII: 491, 505, 571, 572	ارجاسپ

<i>Arjāsp</i> , the grandson of Afrāsiāb, a Turanian champion	ارجاسپ ترک	GD: 98	ارجاسپ
<i>Arjāsf</i> , Arjāsp, the grandson of Afrāsiāb, a Turanian champion		DN: 82; NH: 353; TB: 655	ارجاسف
<i>Arjiya</i> (?), wife of Kurdī, brother of Bahrām Čūbīn		NH: 394–5	ارجية
<i>Ardašīr Bābkān</i> , Ardašīr I	اردشیر ملڪ	DN: 85	اردشیر بابكان
<i>Ardašīr malik</i> , Ardašīr I		NH: 360	اردشیر ملڪ
<i>Ardašīr</i> , Ardašīr I, the founder of Sasanian Empire	بابكان اردشیر	FD VII: 583; FD VIII: 25, 27, 37, 125	اردشیر
<i>Ardawān</i> , a Persian king		FD VIII: 25, 125	اردوان
<i>Arsī Ayyās</i> , famous archer		NH: 367	ارسی ایاس
<i>Aršīšyātīn</i> , celebrated archer (probably a corrupted form of Āriš)		TB I: 992	ارششیاطین
<i>Arīkhsīs al-Khūzī</i> , vizier of Hurmuzd IV	وزیر هرمز اریخسیس الخوري, ارتیحسیس	MS I: 313	اریخسیس الخوزي
<i>Isfandiyār</i> , a mythical king and son of Guštāsp	اسفندیاد	DN: 82	اسفندیار
<i>Isfandiyār</i> , a mythical king and son of Guštāsp		BL II: 767; FD VII: 491, 505, 507, 614; FD VIII: 192	اسفندیار
<i>Usquf-i buzurg</i> , archbishop		BL II: 794–5	اسقف بزرگ
<i>al-Usquf</i> , Roman bishop		NH: 374–5	الاسقف
<i>al-Iskandar</i> , Alexander the Great		DN: 96; NH: 374	الاسکندر
<i>Iskandar-i Rūmī</i> , Alexander the Great		BL II: 794	اسکندر رومی
<i>Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm</i> , a man mentioned in the prophecy of a monk	امة من ولد اسماعیل بن ابراهیم	NH: 737	اسماعیل بن ابراهیم
<i>Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm</i> , a man mentioned in the prophecy of a monk		BL II: 793	اسماعیل بن ابراهیم
<i>'Aswār</i> , one of Hurmuzd IV's chevaliers	حافظ الکرم	AT: 364	اسوار
<i>Asīr-i turk</i> , a Turanian prisoner captured by Bahrām Siyāwušān	جادو, مردی سرخ ریش و کوسه و گربه چشم, یکی ترک اسیر	BL II: 771	اسیر ترک
<i>Aštād</i> , a man		FD VIII: 140	اشتاد
<i>Iṣbahbudha</i> , a general, commander in chief	الإصبهبدین	TB I: 993, 997, 1000	اصبهبد
<i>A'rābī</i> , an arab	عرب	BL II: 791–3, 1011	اعرابی
<i>Afrāsiāb</i> , legendary king of Turan		TB I: 993; FD VII: 571; FD VIII: 64,	افراسیاب

		147, 212; ṬB: 655; GD: 98	
<i>Umma</i> , mother of the descendants of Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm	امّة من ولد اسماعيل بن ابراهيم	NH: 373	امّة
<i>Imra'a</i> , a woman of Kurdī, Bahrām's brother	امراة كردى. المرأة	DN: 108	امراة
<i>Imra'a</i> , a woman forced by a solider from Bahrām Čübīn's army		ṬB: 645; NH: 355	امراة
<i>Amīr ḥarsiyān</i> , head of the guards		BL II: 769–70	امير حرسيان
<i>Amīr šuraṭ</i> , head of the lifeguards		BL II: 770	امير شرط
<i>Anūšjān</i> , son of Mihr-Bastān		NH: 351	انوشجان
<i>Anūšīrwān</i> , Khusraw I, Hurmuzd IV's father		MS I: 317; ṬB: 662	انوشروان
<i>Anūšīrwān</i> , Khusraw I, father of Hurmuzd IV	كسرى بن قباذ	ṬB I: 995, 1000	انوشروان
<i>Anūšīrwān</i> , Anūšīrwān, Khusraw I,	نوشروان	BL II: 758, 760–6, 789, 799, 837–8, 1010–11	انوشروان
<i>Iyyās b. Qabīša</i> , a man from the tribe Ṭayy		DN: 95	اياس بن قبيصة
<i>Iyyās b. Qabīša</i> , a man from the tribe Ṭayy	الرجل. الاعرابي	NH: 371–2	اياس بن قبيصة
<i>Iyyās b. Qabīša</i> , an eminent man from the tribe of Ṭayy		BL II: 791–2	اياس بن قبيصة
<i>Īraš</i> , grandfather of Bahrām Čübīn	جد بهرام	ṬB I: 997	ايرش
<i>Īzad-Jušnas</i> , a man in company with Bahrām Čübīn and three other anonymous men		ṬB I: 997	ايزدجشنس
<i>Īraj</i> , a legendary hero and son of Farīdūn		FD VIII: 99	ايرج
<i>Īzad-Gušasp</i> , one of Bahrām Čübīn's generals		FD VII: 503, 531, 554, 558, 573–4, 584–5, 597; FD VIII: 12, 129, 134, 141, 143, 151, 169, 214, 217, 221; MJ: 96	ايزد گشسپ
<i>Bābak</i> , ancestor of the Sasanians		FD VIII: 25, 33	بابك
<i>Bābwī</i> , Bābwī Armanī, Bābwī of Armenia		FD VIII: 65	بابوى
<i>Bād b. Fayrūz</i> , a general in Khusraw II's army		DN: 90	باد بن فيروز

<i>Bādhān</i> , a man		FD VII: 613	بادان
<i>Bālūy</i> , one of the noble Persians to travel with Khusraw II to the Byzantine		FD VIII: 165	بالوی
<i>Barādar</i> , brother of Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantine		BKh: 103	برادر
<i>Bartaġ</i> / <i>Yartaġ</i> , a brother of Khāqān IV	اخ لخاقان. برتغ, یرتغ. برتغ اخا خاقان ملك الترك	NH: 389–90, 394, 396	برتغ
<i>Burzmehr</i> , unknown man		FD VIII: 165	برزمهر
<i>Barmūdha</i> , son of Šābah, Khāqān III		BKh: 98	برموده
<i>Barmūda b. Šāba</i> , son of Šāba, Khāqān III		MS I: 313	برموده بن شابه
<i>Barmūda b. Šāya</i> , son of Šāya, Khāqān III		AT: 364	برموده بن شایه
<i>Barmūdha b. Šāba</i> , son of Šāba, Khāqān III		ṬB I: 993	برموده بن شابه
<i>Barmūdha b. Šāba Šāh</i> , son of Šāba Šāh, Khāqān III		ṬB: 648–57	برموده بن شابه شاه
<i>Barmūdha b. Šāba</i> , son of Šāba, Khāqān III		YQ: 189	برموده ابن شابه
<i>Buzurg dabīr</i> , a secretary Bahrām Čübīn's army		BL II: 769, 776, 784, 802	بزرگ دبیر
<i>Bastāsf</i> , Arjāsf or Arjāsp in other versions	یستاسف	MS I: 313	بستاسف
<i>Bisṭām</i> , a brother of Bindūy and uncle of Khusraw II		YQ: 191, 194–5; ṬB I: 993–4, 996–8, 1000; BL II: 778, 781, 783–4, 786, 788, 791, 793, 795, 797, 801–3, 805; ṬB: 660, 663, 665–6, 670; BKh: 100–1; AT: 365, 367–8	بسطام
<i>Bisṭām</i> , uncle of Khusraw II and brother of Bindūya	بسطاما, ابن دارا بن دارا مقارع الاسکندر	DN: 86–91, 102, 105–8	بسطام
<i>Bisṭām</i> , uncle of Khusraw II and brother of Bindawayh	خالیه	MS I: 314–6, 318	بسطام
<i>Bisṭām</i> , uncle of Khusraw II and brother of Bindūya	بسطاما, بستام بن شهربنداد	NH: 361, 363, 365, 367–9, 373, 375, 378, 381–2, 386, 389–96	بسطام
<i>Bisṭām</i> , brother of Bindūya and uncle of Khusraw II	خال خسرو	GD: 100	بسطام
<i>Baṭrīq</i> , a Roman general		MS I: 312	بطریق
<i>Biṭrīq-i rūmī</i> , Roman patriarch		FD VIII: 134	بطریق رومی

<i>Bağāwīr</i> , brother of Khāqān IV		DN: 100–2	بغاوير
<i>Bağrūn</i> , brother of Khāqān IV		NH: 383–5, 394, 396	بغرون
<i>Bint ukht Bahrām Šūbīn</i> , daughter of sister of Bahrām Čübīn		DN: 95	بنت اخت بهرام شوبين
<i>Bandād-Jusnas b. al-Jalhān al-Rāzī</i> , a general in Bahrām Čübīn's army		NH: 353	بنداد جنسنس بن الجلهان الرازي
<i>Bandād-Yamidīn b. Dāštān Šāh</i> , a general in Bahrām Čübīn's army		NH: 353	بنداد يميدین بن داشتان شاه
<i>Bandā-Gušasp</i> , general of Bahrām Čübīn	بزرگان لشکر	FD VII: 503, 531, 594, 598, 599	بنداگشسپ
<i>Bindūya</i> , <i>Bindūy</i> , brother of Bistām (Gustham) and uncle of Khusraw II	بندويه بن سابور	DN: 86–98, 102, 105–8	بندويه
<i>Bindūya</i> , <i>Bindūy</i> , brother of Bistām (Gustham) and uncle of Khusraw II		TB: 660, 663, 665–8, 670	بندويه
<i>Bindūya</i> , <i>Bindūy</i> , brother of Bistām (Gustham) and uncle of Khusraw II	خاليه	MS I: 314–5	بندويه
<i>Bindūya</i> , <i>Bindūy</i> , brother of Bistām (Gustham) and uncle of Khusraw II	بندويه بن شهر بنداذ, بندويه خال کسری, یا فاسق	NH: 361, 363, 365–71, 375, 378, 381–2, 390–2	بندويه
<i>Bindūy</i> , a brother of Bistām (Gustham) and uncle of Khusraw II		BL II: 778, 781, 783–4, 786–91, 795, 797–8, 801–3, 805, 835, 1014; MJ: 77–8	بندوی
<i>Bindūy</i> , a brother of Bistām (Gustham) and uncle of Khusraw II	خال خسرو	FD VII: 615, 624, 626; FD VIII: 9, 11, 13–4, 34, 40–1, 44, 49, 51, 53–9, 68–70, 72–4, 125, 131, 140, 143, 148, 149, 159–162, 165, 219, 221	بندوی
<i>Bindūya</i> , <i>Bindūy</i> , brother of Bistām (Gustham) and uncle of Khusraw II		BKh: 100–2; AT: 365, 367–8	بندويه
<i>Bindūya</i> , <i>Bindūy</i> , a brother of Bistām (Gustham) and uncle of Khusraw II	خال خسرو	GD: 100	بندويه

<i>Bindī, Bindūy</i> , a brother of Bisṭām (Gustham) and uncle of Khusraw II		YQ: 191–4	بندي
<i>Bindī, Bindūy</i> , a brother of Bisṭām (Gustham) and uncle of Khusraw II	بنديويه	ṬB I: 993–4, 996–8, 1000	بندي
<i>Bahrām Ādharmihān</i> , possibly one of Bahrām Čübīn's generals		MJ: 96	بهرام آذر مهان
<i>Bahrām b. Siyāwušān</i> , a general of Bahrām Čübīn		DN: 91–5	بهرام ابن سیاوشان
<i>Bahrām Siyāwaš</i> , one of the generals of Bahrām Čübīn.		ṬB I: 998–9; BKh: 102; AṬ: 367	بهرام بن سیاوش
<i>Bahrām b. Siyāwušān</i> , a general in Bahrām Čübīn's army		NH: 353, 357, 365, 368–70	بهرام بن سیاوشان
<i>Bahrām Jarābzīn</i> , distinguished Persian general	رجل من وجوه الفرس, كبير في الفرس, جرابزين	YQ: 193–4	بهرام جرابزين
<i>Bahrām Jūbīn</i> , Bahrām Čübīn	بهرام جوبين مرزيان الري, بهرام من ولد جوبين بن ميلاد من نسل أنوش المعروف بالرام	MS I: 312–4, 316–8	بهرام جوبين
<i>Bahrām Jūbīn</i> , Bahrām Čübīn	بهرام بن بهرام جشنس	ṬB I: 992–1001	بهرام جوبين
<i>Bahrām Jūbīn</i> , Bahrām Čübīn	بهرام بن بهرام جوبين, الاصبهيد, بهرام اصبهيد خراسان, بهرام بن بهرام جشنس اروز الملك	NH: 350, 352–70, 375–80, 382–93	بهرام جوبين
<i>Bahrām Jūbīn</i> , Bahrām Čübīn	بهرام خشنس	AṬ: 364–8	بهرام جوبين
<i>Bahrām Jūr</i> , Bahram Gur, Sasanian king		NH: 367	بهرام جور
<i>Bahrām Čübīn</i> , Bahrām Čübīn	بهرام بن بهرام بن جشنس, بهرام جوبين, بهرام شوبين, بهرام شوبينه, بهرام چوبينه, ملكزادگان و اصفهيدان ري	BL II: 762–80, 782–90, 793, 795–801, 803–5, 833, 835, 838–9, 1011–6	بهرام چوبين
<i>Bahrām Čübīn</i> , Bahrām Čübīn		GD: 98–100; BKh: 98–102	بهرام چوبين
<i>Bahrām Čübīna</i> , Bahrām Čübīn	بهرام پور گنسسپ, پهلوان, بهرام بهرام پور گنسسپ	FD VII: 497–501, 504, 507–8, 510, 512–5, 517, 519–20, 522–3, 529–31, 533, 535, 537–8, 540–4, 547–8, 550–4, 557, 561–2,	بهرام چوبينه

		565–72, 576–7, 579–81, 583–4, 586–94, 596–601, 604–8, 616, 622–3; FD VIII: 7–10, 12–18, 21–2, 25, 27–8, 33–6, 38–9, 41–2, 45–7, 49–50, 52, 56–9, 62, 65, 67–72, 75, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132–3, 135–9, 141–5, 147, 150–5, 167–85, 187–90, 193, 194–8, 200–1, 205–8, 210, 216–9, 221–2, 224, 226–7, 234	
<i>Bahrām Čūbīna</i> , Bahrām Čūbīn	بهرام چوبينه پسر گشسب	MJ: 76–9, 83, 88, 96, 136	بهرام چوبينه
<i>Bahrām Siyāwuš</i> , Bahrām son of Siyāwuš	بهرام پور سیاوش. بهرام گرد سیاوش نژاد	FD VII: 594; FD VIII: 71	بهرام سیاوش
<i>Bahrām Siyāwušān</i> , a general in Bahrām Čūbīn's army		BL II: 771, 783, 786–9; MJ: 77–8, 96	بهرام سیاوشان
<i>Bahrām Šūbīn</i> , Bahrām Čūbīn	رجل من أهل الري	YQ: 188–95	بهرام شوبين
<i>Bahrām Šūbīn</i> , Bahrām Čūbīn	بهرام بن بهرام جشنس, هذا الفارسي, الأصهبذ, ايها الفارسي	DN: 81–91, 93, 95–107, 109, 114	بهرام شوبين
<i>Bahrām Šūbīn</i> , Bahrām Čūbīn		IB: 642–55, 657, 659–66, 668–9, 672–87, 731	بهرام شوبين
<i>Bahrām Šūbīna</i> , Bahrām Čūbīn	بهرام	QT: 664	بهرام شوبينه
<i>Bahrām Šūbīna</i> , Bahrām Čūbīn	بهرام شوبينه اصفهذ الري, بهرام جوبينه بالري	MQ III: 150, 169–70	بهرام شوبينه
<i>Bahrām Gūr</i> , Bahram Gur, Sasanian king		BL II: 763	بهرام گور
<i>Bihzād</i> , a commander of the king of the Khazars		YQ: 188	بهزاد
<i>Bahman</i> , Sasanian king		DN: 108; FD VIII: 235	بهمن
<i>Bahman b. Asfandiādh</i> , Bahman Asfandiār, legendary Persian king		DN: 107	بهمن بن اسفندياز
<i>Bīward</i> , a man		FD VII: 614	بيورد
<i>Purmāya-Šāh</i> , a king		FD VIII: 142	پرمایه شاه

<i>Parmūda</i> , Khāqān III	شاه ترکان و چین، پرموده ی ترک، خاقان، خاقان چین، سپهدار و سالار ترکان و چین	FD VIII: 524, 546–7, 550–5, 557–8, 562–3, 565–6, 573–5, 577–81, 595, 608, 610	پرموده
<i>Parvīz</i> , Khusraw II	کسری پرویز، کسری، خسرو، پرویز بن هرمزد	BL II: 759, 777–9, 781–802, 804–5, 835, 839, 1013–5	پرویز
<i>Parvīz b. Hurmuz</i> , Khusraw II	اپرویز، کسری اپرویز بن هرمز بن انوشروان	BKh: 99–103	پرویز بن هرمز
<i>Pisar</i> , son of Qārīn		BL II: 799–800	پسر
<i>Pisar-i pisar</i> , grandson of Khusraw II		BL II: 793	پسر پسر
<i>Pisar-i 'amm-i Yazdān Bakhšīš</i> , cousin of Yazdān Bakhšīš who kills Yazdān		BL II: 779–80, 1014	پسر عم یزدان بخشش
<i>Pisar-i malik-i Rūm</i> , son of Maurice, Emperor of Byzantine	پسرش، پسر خویش	BL II: 793, 838	پسر ملک الروم
<i>Pisar-i malik-i turk</i> , son of the king the Turanians, Sābah-Šāh	پسر سابه شاه، خاقان ترک، پسر ساوه، پسر ساوه شاه	BL II: 772–4, 1012–3	پسر ملک ترک
<i>Pīrzan</i> , an old woman who receives Bahrām and his troops	یکی پیرزن	FD VII: 618–9; FD VIII: 151–3	پیرزن
<i>Pīrūz</i> , Persian king		FD VII: 613; FD VIII: 64, 68, 99, 100, 125	پیروز
<i>Tuburg</i> , brother of Khāqān IV who fights with Gurdiyah after Bahrām's death		FD VIII: 215–7, 232	تبرگ
<i>al-Turk</i> , a Turanian who intrigues against Bahrām		MQ III: 170	الترك
<i>al-Turk</i> , a Turanian who kills Bahrām Čübīn	ترکی، التركي	TB: 679, 681–2	الترك
<i>al-Turkiyy</i> , a Turanian who kills Bahrām Čübīn		YQ: 194	الترکي
<i>al-Turkiyy</i> , a Turanian man who kills Bahrām Čübīn	الغلام	DN: 104	الترکي
<i>Turkiyy</i> , a Turanian who kills Bahrām Čübīn	غلام ترکی، التركي، رسول خاتون الملكة، نفر، رجل واحد	NH: 388–9, 391	ترکي
<i>Turk</i> , a Turanian		FD VII: 542; FD VIII: 34, 171–2, 231	ترک
<i>Turkī</i> , a Turanian who kills Bahrām Čübīn	ترکان	BL II: 804–5, 1015	ترکی
<i>Tūr</i> , eldest son of Farīdūn		FD VIII: 147	تور

<i>Tīdūs</i> , brother of Mauricius (cf. <i>Ṭiyūdūs</i> , <i>Ṭiyūdus</i>)		MS I: 317	تيدوس
<i>Ṭalāṭa ʿanfār min al-atrāk</i> , Bahrām Čübīn's three Turanian companions	التركي، التركي الثاني، الثالث	NH: 376	ثلاثة انفار من الاثراك
<i>Ṭalāṭa nafar min qurāba malik al-turk</i> , Bahrām Čübīn's three Turanian companions	ثلاثة نفر من وجوه الأثراك، الأثراك الثلاثة	ṬB I: 994, 997	ثلاثة نفر من قرابة ملك الترك
<i>Ṭalāṭa nafar min aṣḥābi-hi</i> , Khusraw II's three companions		YQ: 191	ثلاثة نفر من أصحابه
<i>Ṭiyādūs</i> , a brother of Maurice, king of the Byzantines	اخو ملك الروم	YQ: 191, 193	ثيادوس
<i>Ṭiyādūs</i> , son of Emperor of the Byzantines		DN: 96–7, 102; BKh: 102	ثيادوس
<i>Ṭiyādūs</i> , son of Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines and brother of Maryam	ثيادوس ابن قيصر	NH: 372, 375–8, 381–2	ثيادوس
<i>Ṭiyādhūs</i> , brother of Maurice who is sent to help Khusraw II		ṬB I: 999	ثيادوس
<i>Ṭiyāṭūs</i> , son of Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	بسر و دختر ملك الروم، ييادوس	BL II: 794–6, 801–3, 1014	ثياطوس
<i>Jāriya</i> , a girl, slave girl, young woman	جارية من بنات ملوك برجان و الجالقة و الصقالبة و الوشكنش	MS I: 316	جارية
<i>Jāmāsp</i> , grand vizier of Guštāsp		FD VII: 607	جاماسپ
<i>Jamšīd</i> , mythological king of Iran		FD VIII: 64, 160, 202	جمشيد
<i>Janūy</i> , a noble man who appears together with Zangūy	دو مرد جوان	FD VIII: 189	جنوى
<i>Juwān Šīr b. Kīsrā</i> , son of Gurdiya, sister of Bahrām		DN: 114	جوان شیر بن کسرى
<i>Jūdarz</i> , Gūdarz, Persian legendary hero	جودرز	DN: 82, 90, 92	جودرز
<i>Jūdarz</i> , Gūdarz, Persian legendary hero		NH: 353	جودرز
<i>Ḥājib</i> , chamberlain who hears about Hurmuzd IV's plans to poison Khusraw II		FD VII: 612	حاجب
<i>Ḥassān b. Ḥanzala b. Ḥayya al-Ṭāʾī</i> , an Arab who gives Khusraw II his horse		MS I: 314–5	حسان ابن حنظلة بن حية الطائي
<i>Ḥassān b. Ḥanzala al-Ṭāʾī</i> , an Arab man who gives Khusraw II his horse		MQ III: 169	حسان بن حنظلة الطائي
<i>Khātūn</i> , wife of Khāqān I	امراة خاقان	YQ: 188	خاتون

<i>Khātūn</i> , wife of Khāqān IV		YQ: 193; BL II: 804–5, 1015; FD VIII: 176–80, 183, 194–6, 198–200, 206	خاتون
<i>Khātūn</i> , wife of Khāqān IV	الملكة	DN: 103–4	خاتون
<i>Khātūn</i> , wife of Khāqān IV	امراة خاقان	ṬB I: 1001	خاتون
<i>Khātūn</i> , wife of Khāqān I, Hurmuzd IV's grandmother		BL II: 758, 765; FD VII: 494–5; NH: 351	خاتون
<i>Khātūn</i> , wife of Khāqān IV	خاتون امراة خاقان	NH: 383, 385, 387–9	خاتون
<i>Khātūn</i> , wife of Khāqān b. Barmūdha (Khāqān IV)	خاتون سيدة	ṬB: 678–9, 681, 683	خاتون
<i>Khāqān</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	ملك الترك	QT: 664	خاقان
<i>Khāqān</i> , Khāqān IV, king of the Turanians		DN: 99–104; ṬB I: 1001; BKh: 102–3; MJ: 78	خاقان
<i>Khāqān</i> , Khāqān IV, king of the Turanians	خاقان ملك الترك	MS I: 317–8	خاقان
<i>Khāqān</i> , Khāqān I, king of the Turanians	خاقان ترك, شاه ترکان	BL II: 764–6, 1010	خاقان
<i>Khāqān</i> , Khāqān IV, king of the Turanians	خاقان ترك, ملك ترك, خاقان ملك ترك	BL II: 800, 804–5, 1015	خاقان
<i>Khāqān</i> , Khāqān IV, king of the Turanians	خاقان چين, سپهدار ترکان, سالار چين	FD VIII: 167–80, 183–4, 186–98, 205–8, 210–12, 214–16, 221, 223	خاقان
<i>Khāqān</i> , Khāqān I, king of the Turanians		FD VII: 494–7	خاقان
<i>Khāqān</i> , Khāqān I, king of the Turanians	خاقان ملك الترك, الملك	NH: 351–2	خاقان
<i>Khāqān</i> , Khāqān IV, king of the Turanians	ملك الاتراك	NH: 381, 383–9, 391, 396	خاقان
<i>Khāqān al-akbar</i> , Khāqān I, king of the Turanians		ṬB I: 988	خاقان الأكبر
<i>Khāqān b. Barmūdha</i> , Khāqān IV, son of Barmūdha	خاقان	ṬB: 658, 674–81, 684	خاقان بن برمودة
<i>Khāqān malik al-Turk</i> , Khāqān IV	ملك الترك	YQ: 192–4	خاقان ملك الترك
<i>Khālīd b. Jabala al-Ġassānī</i> , a man whom Khusraw II meets at the river Yarmouk		DN: 95	خالد بن جبلة الغساني
<i>Khurrād</i> , Persian commander who is sent by Hurmuzd IV to fight the Khazars		FD VII: 492	خراد

<i>Khurrād-Burzīn</i> , Hurmuzd IV's vizier	برزین, خراد برزینہ, دبیر بزرگ	FD VII: 514–6, 518, 530, 533, 541, 566–7, 570–1, 587–8, 590, 592–3; FD VIII: 13, 29, 41, 78, 163, 165, 169, 190–1, 194–7, 199, 207, 221	خراد برزین
<i>Khurrād-Burzīn</i> , a man whom Khusraw II sends to the land of the Turanians		MJ: 78	خراد برزین
<i>Khurāsān</i> , name of a man (not location)		FD VIII: 61–4	خراسان
<i>Khurbundādhūya</i> (?), father of Biṣṭām and Bindūya		NH: 361	خربندادویه
<i>Khirs</i> , a bear, monster		BL II: 804, 1015	خرس
<i>Khuršīdhān</i> , a man who shows Biṣṭām and Binday the way through a desert		ṬB I: 998	خرشیدان
<i>Khazarwān</i> , a fighter in Bahrām's army		FD VIII: 62, 64	خزروان
<i>Khusraw Parvīz</i> , Khusraw II	خسرو, پور هرمز, شاه ایران	FD VII: 606, 610–15, 623, 626, 628, 629; FD VIII: 7–9, 11–12, 14, 16–18, 23, 26–7, 29, 33, 35, 40–6, 48–9, 51–61, 63–4, 68–70, 74–8, 124, 126–37, 139–46, 149–50, 153, 155, 158–163, 165, 184, 188, 190, 194, 197, 199, 203, 204, 207, 219, 220, 223, 224, 226–33, 235–7, 239	خسرو پرویز
<i>Khusraw Parvīz</i> , Khusraw II	پرویز	MJ: 77–9, 136	خسرو پرویز
<i>Khusraw Parvīz</i> , Khusraw II	خسرو بن هرمز, خسرو	GD: 99–100	خسرو پرویز
<i>Khamānī</i> , daughter of Bahman		DN: 108	خمانی
<i>Khwāhar-zāda-yi Bahrām Čūbīn</i> , daughter of Bahrām's sister and Bahrām Siyāwušān's wife	زن بهرام سیلوشان, خواهرزاده بهرام شوبین	BL II: 789	خواهرزاده بهرام شوبین
<i>Khūšhawāz</i> , a man		FD VIII: 64, 68, 99, 100	خوشنواز

<i>Dārā</i> , Sassanian ancestor		FD VIII: 33	دارا
<i>Dārā b. Bahman</i> , Sassanian ancestor		NH: 392	دارا بن بهمن
<i>Dārā b. Bahman Sīnḥalbūn</i> (?), Sassanian ancestor		DN: 107	دارا بن بهمن سینحلبون
<i>Dārā b. Dārā</i> , a Sassanian ancestor		NH: 393	دارا بن دارا
<i>Dānā-Panāh</i> , a man		FD VIII: 124	دانا پناه
<i>Dānā-yi Ān</i> , wise man of China		FD VIII: 54	دانای چین
<i>Dāhī Jild</i> (?) <i>Hurmuz</i> , a man sent by Khusraw II to Khāqān IV in order to kill Bahrām Čūbīn		BKh: 102	داهی جلد هرمز
<i>Dabīr-i buzurg</i> , chief scribe		FD VII: 594, 599–600, 608	دبیر بزرگ
<i>Dukht-i Bābak</i> , daughter of Bābak		FD VIII: 25	دخت بابک
<i>Dukht-i Khātūn</i> , mother of Hurmuzd IV and wife of Nūšīn-Rawān (Khusraw I)	مادر	FD VII: 494–5	دخت خاتون
<i>Dukht-i Khāqān</i> , daughter of Khāqān IV	آن زن	FD VIII: 200	دخت خاقان
<i>Dukhtar</i> , daughter of Khusraw II		BL II: 793	دختر
<i>Dukhtar-i parī</i> , a girl whom Bahrām meets on a hunting trip	کنیزک، پری	BL II: 766, 1014	دختر پری
<i>Dukhtar-i khāqān-i turk</i> , daughter of Khāqān I, Hurmuzd IV's mother		BL II: 758	دختر خاقان ترک
<i>Dukhtar-i qāqum-i</i> (?) <i>Khāqān</i> , daughter of the Khāqān I		BKh: 98	دختر قاقم خاقان
<i>Dukhtar-i Qayṣar</i> , daughter of Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	دختر خویش	GD: 100	دختر قیصر
<i>al-Dumustuq</i> , a roman general and prince	امیر الأمراء	MS I: 315	الدمستق
<i>Ra's-u zājirī al-ṭayr</i> , head of the augurs		NH: 354	رأس زاجري الطير
<i>Ra'īs al-wuzarā'</i> , head of viziers at the court of Maurice		NH: 374	رئيس الوزراء
<i>al-Rāhib</i> , a monk		NH: 372–3, 391	الراهب
<i>Rāhib</i> , a monk		BL II: 793	راهب
<i>Rajul tājir fārisī</i> , a Persian merchant		MS I: 318	رجل تاجر فارسي

<i>Rajul ḥawārī</i> , a Christian man who kills Ādhīn-Juṣnas		YQ: 190	رجل حواري
<i>Rustam</i> , Persian legendary hero Rostam		DN: 82; BL II: 767; FD VII: 504, 506, 547, 602; FD VIII: 192; NH: 353, 367	رستم
<i>Rustam</i> , Persian legendary hero Rostam	رأية رستم	TB: 644	رستم
<i>Al-rasūl</i> , messenger	رسول	NH: 355, 384, 387, 389–90	الرسول
<i>al-Rūmiyy</i> , a Roman, a Byzantine man killed by Bahrām Čübīn		DN: 97	الرومي
<i>Rūmī</i> , a Roman		FD VII: 531; FD VIII: 231	رومی
<i>Zājir</i> , an augurer		YQ: 188	زاجر
<i>Zād-Farrukh</i> , the head groom of Hurmuzd IV		FD VII: 498; FD VIII: 62–3, 140	زادفرخ
<i>Zardušt</i> , Zoroaster		FD VIII: 31, 61	زردشت
<i>Zan</i> , a woman		MJ: 78	زن
<i>Zan</i> , a woman		BKh: 102	زن
<i>Zangūy</i> , a noble man who appears with Janūy	دو مرد جوان	FD VIII: 140, 189	زنگوی
<i>Zanī</i> , a woman		FD VII: 512; FD VIII: 71	زنی
<i>Zanī tājdār</i> , a woman whom Bahrām Čübīn meets on a hunting trip	آن زن, زن جادوی	FD VII: 585–6, 590–2	زنی تاجدار
<i>Zanī ganda pīr</i> , an old woman who receives Bahrām and his troops		BL II: 798–9	زنی گنده پیر
<i>Zawja al-Malik</i> , wife of Khāqān IV		AT: 367–8	زوجة الملك
<i>Sāba šāh</i> , Khāqān II, uncle of Hurmuzd IV	سایه, پسر خاقان, ملک ترک, خال هرمز, سایه ترک, ساوه ملک ترک, ساوه شاه, پسر خالش	BL II: 760, 762, 768–72, 1011–3	سایه شاه
<i>Sābūr Abarkān</i> , Khusraw II's general	ثلاثة من اصحابه, القواد الثلاثة	NH: 365, 373, 393–4	سابور ابرکان
<i>Sābūr b. 'Afriyān b. Farrukhzād</i> , one of the men who fight Bahrām with Khusraw II		TB I: 1000	سابور بن افریان بن فرخزاد
<i>Sābūr b. Abarkān Wīzdak</i> , Khusraw II's general		DN: 90, 97–8, 108	سابور بن ابرکان ویزدک
<i>Sābūr dhī al-Aktāf</i> , Shapur II the Great		DN: 92	سابور ذي الأكتاف

<i>Sāhīr</i> , a magician captured by Bahrām Čübīn		YQ: 189	ساحر
<i>Sāhīr</i> , a magician captured by Bahrām Čübīn	الأسير, رجل ساحر	NH: 357	ساحر
<i>Sām</i> , a legendary Persian hero		FD VIII: 37	سام
<i>Sāw-Šāh</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	سباه شاه	MJ: 76	ساو شاه
<i>Sāwah-Šāh</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	ساوه, شاه ترکان, شاه, ساوه سالار چین	FD VII: 488, 490–1, 493, 496, 500–1, 504, 508–9, 513, 515–6, 518–23, 529–31, 534–5, 537–40, 543–5, 548, 550–1, 553, 556, 558, 573, 595, 603, 610; FD VIII: 29, 32, 35, 39, 61	ساوه شاه
<i>Sitāra šumar</i> , astrologer who predicts Hurmuzd IV's mother's future		FD VII: 496–7	ستاره شمر
<i>Sahnān</i> , a man who introduces Mihrān-Sitād to Hurmuzd IV		BL II: 764	سحنان
<i>Sarjīs</i> , Sergius, a military commander who is sent by Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines		ṬB I: 999; ṬB: 668	سرجیس
<i>Sarjīs</i> , Sergius, a military commander who is sent by Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines		BKh: 102	سرجیس
<i>Sargis</i> , Sergius, Roman military commander		FD VIII: 135	سرگیس
<i>Surūš</i> , an angel whom Khusraw II meets		FD VIII: 145	سروش
<i>Sikandar</i> , Alexander the Great	اسکندری	FD VIII: 26, 30, 64	سکندر
<i>Salm</i> , Farīdūn's son		FD VIII: 99, 103, 147	سلم
<i>Sulaymān</i> , Suleiman		MS I: 316	سلیمان
<i>Sih turk</i> , Bahrām Čübīn's three Turanian companions	یک ترک, دیگر ترک	BL II: 795–6	سه ترک
<i>Sih turk</i> , Bahrām Čübīn's three Turanian companions		FD VIII: 12, 43	سه ترک
<i>Savār-i 'ajam</i> , a Persian cavalier		BL II: 797	سوار عجم
<i>Sūkhrā</i> , famous archer		ṬB I: 993	سوخرا
<i>Sūfarā</i> , Kay Qubād's vizier		FD VII: 603	سوفرا

Sūfzāy (= Sūkhṛā), famous archer		FD VIII: 125–6	سوفزا
<i>Siyāwakhš</i> , Siyawuṣ, father of Kaykhusraw		MS I: 313	سياوخش
<i>Siyāwuṣ</i> , Siyawuṣ, father of Kaykhusraw		DN: 82; FD VII: 505, 541, 572; FD VIII: 212; ṬB: 655, 657; GD: 98	سياوش
<i>Sayf b. dhī Yazn</i> , a man who transferred the payment from the King of Yemen to Wahriz		BL II: 761	سيف بن ذى يزن
<i>Šāba Malik al-Turk</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	ملك الترك	ṬB I: 991–2	شابه ملك الترك
<i>Šāba</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	خاقان	BKh: 98	شابه
<i>Šāba</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	شابه ملك الترك, صاحب الترك	YQ: 187–9	شابه
<i>Šāba b. Alast</i> (?), Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	ملك تركستان	GD: 98	شابه بن المست
<i>Šāba b. Šab</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	شابه بن شاب, شيايه بن شيب, شانه بن شب, عظيم من ملوك الترك	MS I: 312–3	شابه بن شب
<i>Šāba Šāh</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	خاقان	ṬB: 642, 644–5, 647, 648–9	شابه شاه
<i>Šāpūr</i> , a nobleman or general close to Khusraw II		FD VIII: 9, 41, 125, 136–7, 139–40, 165	شاپور
<i>Šāhān-Šāh</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	شاهانشاه ملك الترك, ملك الاتراك, ملك الترك	NH: 350–1, 355–7, 359–60	شاهانشاه
<i>Šāhānšāh</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	شاهانشاه الترك, صاحب الترك, ملك الترك, ملك الأتراك, خاقان, الملك	DN: 81–4	شاهانشاه
<i>Šāya malik al-Turk</i> , Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	ملك الترك	AT: 364	شايه ملك الترك
<i>Šarwīn</i> (?) <i>b. Kāmjār</i> (?), a general in Khusraw II's army		DN: 90	شروين ابن كامجار
<i>Šahriyār</i> , Hurmuzd IV's son	الغلام, طفل صغير	NH: 370	شهريار
<i>Šahriyār</i> , a son of Hurmuzd IV		BL II: 778, 788–9, 834	شهريار
<i>Šahriyār b. Hurmizd</i> , Šahriyār son of Hurmizd		DN: 94	شهريار بن هرمزد
<i>Šīrzād b. al-Bihbūdhān</i> , a man		DN: 105	شيرزاد ابن البيهودان
<i>Šīrzīl</i> , a commander who helps Khusraw II on his way to Āzerbaijan		FD VII: 613	شيرزيل

<i>Širkappi</i> , a monster half ape half lion	اژدها	FD VIII: 176–82	شیرکپی
<i>Širūya</i> , son of Khusraw II	شیروی	BL II: 793, 839	شیریوه
<i>Širūya</i> , son of Khusraw II		BKh: 100	شیریوه
<i>Širin</i> , wife of Khusraw II	کنیزک	BL II: 836–7	شیرین
<i>Širīn</i> , wife of Khusraw II		FD VIII: 232	شیرین
<i>Šāhib al-ḥaras</i> , head of the guards of Khāqān II, king of the Turanians	صاحب الشرطة	NH: 356, 390	صاحب الحرس
<i>Šāhib al-ḥaras</i> , head of the guards of the king of the Turanians	صاحب الشرطة	NH: 356, 390–1	صاحب الحرس
<i>Šāhib al-khabar</i> , head of intelligence		TB: 657	صاحب الخبر
<i>Šāhib al-Ruhā</i> , ruler of Edessa		YQ: 191	صاحب الرها
<i>Šāhib al-Qarya</i> , ruler of a village		AT: 366	صاحب القرية
<i>Šāhib ḥarasi-hi</i> , head of the guards of Khāqān II		DN: 83, 106	صاحب حرسه
<i>Ḍaḥḥāk</i> , Persian legendary hero		FD VIII: 32, 60, 64	ضحاک
<i>Ṭahmūrat</i> , Tahmuras, legendary king of Iran	طهمورث	FD VIII: 192	طهمورت
<i>Ṭūs</i> , son of Nawzar		FD VII: 602	طوس
<i>‘Āmil al-Rayy</i> , governor of Ray		NH: 391	عامل الري
<i>‘Abbās</i> , an Arab general who attacks the lands of Persia		FD VII: 489	عباس
<i>‘Abbās al-‘Aḥwal</i> , Abbās the Squinter, one of the two Arabs who attack the Persians	عباس معروف بأحول	MS I: 312	عباس الأحول
<i>‘Abbās al-‘Aḥwal</i> , Abbās the Squinter, one of the two Arabs who attack the Persians		TB I: 991	عباس الأحول
<i>‘Abbās al-‘Aḥwal</i> , Abbās the Squinter, one of the two Arabs who attack the Persians		BL II: 760	عباس الاحول
<i>‘Abbās al-‘Aḥwal</i> , Abbās the Squinter, Arab who attacks the Persians		GD: 98	عباس الاحول
<i>‘Ajūz</i> , an old woman who receives Bahrām and his troops		DN: 98	عجوز
<i>‘Ajūz</i> , an old woman who receives Bahrām and his troops	العجوز	NH: 379	عجوز

' <i>Ajūz</i> , an old woman who receives Bahrām and his troops		IB: 672–4	عجوز
' <i>Uryān</i> , a naked man who carries a basket of sheep heads	رجل عريان	NH: 354	عريان
' <i>Uryān</i> , a naked man who carries a basket of sheep heads		IB: 644	عريان
' <i>Amrū</i> , an Arab general who attacks the lands of Persia		FD VII: 489	عمرو
' <i>Amrū ibn al-'Azraq</i> , Amr the Blue-Eyed One, one of the two Arabs who attack the Persians		BL II: 760	عمرو ابن الأزرق
' <i>Amrū ibn al-'Azraq</i> , Amr the Blue-Eyed One, one of the two Arabs who attack the Persians		IB I: 991	عمرو الأزرق
' <i>Amr al-'Afwah</i> , Amr the Gaping mouth, one of the two Arabs who attack the Persians		MS I: 312	عمرو الأفوه
<i>Ġulām</i> , a servant	غلامان	BL II: 776, 792, 798–9, 1015	غلام
<i>Ġulāmī</i> , a servant		MJ: 78	غلامی
<i>al-Fārs al-rūmiyy</i> , a Roman horseman		AT: 367	الفارس الرومي
<i>Farāsiyāb</i> , Afrāsiāb, mythical king of Turan		DN: 92; MS I: 313; NH: 383	فراسياب
<i>Farrukh-Hurmuz</i> , one of the men who fight Bahrām with Khusraw II		IB I: 1000	فرخهرمز
<i>Firistāda</i> , a messenger		FD VII: 510–12, 516, 519–20, 526, 529, 551, 560–61, 563, 581, 610–11, 626	فرستاده
<i>Farīdūn</i> , a legendary king of Persia	أفریدون	FD VII: 543; FD VIII: 13, 32, 90, 147	فریدون
<i>Faġfūr</i> , son of Sāwah-Šāh, Khāqān II	فغفور چینی	FD VII: 495, 517, 518, 529, 548	فغفور
<i>Faġfūra</i> , brother of Šābah Šāh, Khāqān II		IB: 644–6, 648	فغفورة
<i>Fīrūz</i> , a king		DN: 84	فیروز
<i>Qābūs</i> , Kay Kāwus, son of Kay Qubād		DN: 82	قابوس
<i>Qārīn</i> , son of Kāwah	قارن الجبلي النهاوندي	DN: 99	قارن
<i>Qārīn</i> , a local king in the regions of Jurjān and Qūmiš		BL II: 799–800	قارن

who sends his army against Bahrām Čübīn			
<i>Qārīn</i> , son of Kāwah		FD VII: 603	قارن
<i>Qārīn al-Jabalī</i> , a hundred-year-old wise man	شيخ, شيخ كبير	NH: 380	قارن الجبلي
<i>Qādī al-quḍāh</i> , judge of the judges	الموبدان	NH: 354–5, 361–2, 381, 386	قاضي القضاة
<i>Khāqum</i> (?) <i>Khāqān</i> , Khāqān I, father of Hurmuzd IV's mother		BKh: 98	قاقم خاقان
<i>Qaḥṭān</i> , a legendary ancestor of the South Arabians		MS I: 312	قحطان
<i>Qird</i> , an ape, monster that lives in the mountain		NH: 385–6	قرد
<i>Qulūn</i> , a Turanian who kills Bahrām Čübīn		FD VIII: 195, 197, 199–201, 206	قلون
<i>Qulūn</i> , a servant who kills Bahrām Čübīn	تركي	MJ: 78	قلون
<i>Qahramān Bindūya</i> , household manager of Bindūya		NH: 391	قهرامان بندويه
<i>Qayṣar</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines		QT: 664	قيصر
<i>Qayṣar</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	موريقيس, ملك الروم	MS I: 312, 315–17	قيصر
<i>Qayṣar</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	قيصر ملك الروم, ملك الروم قيصر	NH: 350, 366, 372–5, 377, 381–2, 387, 391	قيصر
<i>Qayṣar</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	ملك الروم, ايها الملك	DN: 81, 91, 95–6	قيصر
<i>Qayqāwus</i> , Kay Kāwus, son of Kay Qubād		NH: 353, 367	قيقاوس
<i>Qays b. Ḥārīt</i> , a noble Arab from Egypt	از آزادگان عرب	FD VIII: 76–7	قيس بن حارث
<i>Qayṣar</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	ملك روم, ملك الروم, قيصر روم, قيصر ملك الروم موريق	BL II: 760–1, 785–6, 790–6, 801, 838, 1011, 1014	قيصر
<i>Qayṣar</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	شاه روم	FD VII: 488, 492; FD VIII: 48, 50, 69, 134, 155, 158, 159, 161, 162, 207	قيصر
<i>Qayṣar</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	موريق	GD: 98	قيصر
<i>Kātib Malik al-Rūm</i> , scribe of Maricius, Emperor of the Byzantines		MS I: 316	كاتب ملك الروم
<i>Kāhin</i> , diviner in the service of Hurmuzd IV who sees the future of Bahrām Čübīn		TB: 644	كاهن

<i>Kāhina</i> , a female diviner Yazdān-Jušnas meets	امراة كاهنة	NH: 362	كاهنة
<i>Kurdī</i> , brother of Bahrām Čübīn		ṬB: 686	کردی
<i>Kurdī</i> , brother of Bahrām	کردی اخو بهرام	AT: 367	کردی
<i>Kurdī</i> , brother of Bahrām Čübīn	اخي بهرام جوبين, کرديا اخا بهرام	NH: 394–6	کردی
<i>Kurdī</i> , brother of Bahrām Čübīn	آخو بهرام جوبين	ṬB I: 994, 997–998, 1000–1	کردی
<i>Kurdiyya</i> , Gurdiya, wife of Bahrām Čübīn and his sister	امراة بهرام, اخت بهرام و امراته	YQ: 194–5	کردية
<i>Kurdiyya</i> , Gurdiya, sister of Bahrām Čübīn	امراة بسطام	DN: 105, 107, 109– 10, 114	کردية
<i>Kurdiyya</i> , Gurdiya, sister of Bahrām	آخته کردية	MS I: 317–8	کردية
<i>Kurdiyya</i> , Gurdiya, sister of Bahrām Čübīn		ṬB I: 998, 1001	کردية
<i>Kurdiyya</i> , Gurdiya, sister of Bahrām Čübīn and wife of Bisṭām	کردية اخت بهرام, امراة بسطام, سيده نسائي, الكردية بنت بهرام بن جشنس, کرديا	NH: 389, 392, 394– 6	کردية
<i>Kurdiyya</i> , Gurdiya, sister and wife of Bahrām Čübīn	آخته و امراته	ṬB: 682–6	کردية
<i>Kurdī</i> , brother of Bahrām Čübīn	کرديه	YQ: 191, 195	کردی
<i>Kisrā Abrawīz</i> , Khusraw II	ملك	YQ: 190–5	كسرى ابرويز
<i>Kisrā</i> 'Anūšīrwān, Khusraw I, Hurmuzd IV's father		DN: 99	كسرى انوشروان
<i>Kisrā Anūšīrwān</i> , Khusraw I, Hurmuzd IV's father	كسرى	NH: 350–1, 380	كسرى انوشروان
<i>Kunduġ</i> (?), Khāqān I's diviner	العراف, الكاهن	NH: 351	كندغ
<i>Kay-Khusraw</i> , the third king of Kayanid dynasty		DN: 82	كيخسرو
<i>Kāhina</i> , a female diviner whom Yazdān Bakhšīš meets	زنى پرى, زن	BL II: 779–80	كاهنه
<i>Kāwus Kay</i> , legendary Persian king	كاوس شاه, كاوس	FD VII: 504–5, 601– 2; FD VIII: 203	كاوس كى
<i>Kadkhudā</i> , magistrate, respected man	آن مرد پير, كندخابيان, كندخابى	FD VII: 525; FD VIII: 194–6, 209, 237	كندخدا
<i>Kurdī</i> , brother of Bahrām Čübīn	اخو بهرام شوبين, کردي بن بهرام جشنس	DN: 90, 109–10	کردی
<i>Kurdiya</i> , sister of Bahrām Čübīn		MJ: 78–9	كرديه
<i>Kanīzak</i> , Khātūn's daughter kidnapped by the monster	دختر	BL II: 804, 1015	كنيزك
<i>Kūt</i> , a Roman general in the army of Khusraw II		FD VIII: 131–4	كوت

<i>Kay Khusraw</i> , king of the Kayanid dynasty		FD VII: 572; FD VIII: 192	کی خسرو
<i>Kay Qubād</i> , a Persian king from the Kayanian family and descendant of Manučehr	قباد	FD VII: 603, 605; FD VIII: 68, 125, 160, 163, 192	کی قباد
<i>Gurdūy</i> , Bahrām's brother and a nobleman close to Khusraw II		FD VIII: 9, 12, 14, 40, 49, 125, 136, 138, 140, 143, 165, 212, 221, 223–6	گردوی
<i>Gurdiya</i> , Bahrām Čübīn's sister, later wife to Khusraw II	خواهری	BL II: 800, 805, 1015	گردیه
<i>Gurdiya</i> , sister of Bahrām Čübīn	خواهر, خردمند زن, رای زن, شیرزن, خواهر پهلوان, گرانمایه زن	FD VII: 596–7, 600–1, 605, 606; FD VIII: 35, 203–5, 209–10, 212, 214–7, 221–4, 226–8, 231–3, 238	گردیه
<i>Gurdiya</i> , sister of Bahrām Čübīn	خواهر بهرام چوبین	BKh: 102–3	گردیه
<i>Gurgīn</i> , legendary hero		BL II: 762; FD VIII: 21, 29; GD: 98	گرگین
<i>Gustham</i> , Bistām, a brother of Bindūy and uncle of Khusraw II	خال خسرو, بسطام	FD VII: 615, 624–6; FD VIII: 9, 13–4, 16, 34, 40–1, 44–6, 49, 51, 75 125, 131, 136, 139, 143, 159, 165, 219, 221, 223, 225–6	گستهم
<i>Gustham</i> , Bistām, a brother of Bindūy and uncle of Khusraw II	گستهم	MJ: 77–9	گستهم
<i>Guštāsp</i> , legendary Persian king		FD VII: 491; FD VIII: 24	گشتاسپ
<i>Gūdarz</i> , son of Kašwād		FD VII: 505, 602	گودرز
<i>Gīw</i> , son of Gudarz		FD VII: 602	گیو
<i>Gayūmart</i> , Gayūmart		FD VIII: 160	گیومرت
<i>Luhrāsp</i> , a Kayanian king, father of Guštāsb		FD VII: 491, 572; GD: 98	لهراسپ
<i>Luhrāsf</i> , a Kayanian king, father of Guštāsb	لهراسف ملك, بهراسف ملك الترك	MS I: 313	لهراسف
<i>Māriya</i> , daughter of Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantine		MS: 317	ماریه
<i>Māhiyār</i> , a legendary man		FD VIII: 27	ماهیار
<i>Muḥammad b. Jarīr</i> , al-Ṭabarī		BL II: 764	محمد بن جریر
<i>Madhhab</i> , a girl Bahrām Čübīn meets in a hunting trip	جاریه, المذهب	NH: 360–1	مذهب
<i>Mardān Bih Qahrimān</i> , brother of Bindūya		DN: 106	مردان به قهرمان

<i>Mardān Sīna</i> , a general in Bahrām Čübīn's army		ṬB: 683–4	مردان سینه
<i>Mardān Sīna al-Ruwaydaštī</i> , a general of Bahrām Čübīn	رئيس اصحاب بهرام	DN: 89, 104, 106	مردان سینه الرویدشتی
<i>Mardān Sīna Wīzadjušn</i> , a general of Bahrām Čübīn	رئيس اصحاب بهرام	DN: 98, 104, 106–7	مردان سینه ویزدجشنس
<i>Mardān Šīna al-Rawandaštī</i> , a general in Bahrām Čübīn's army	مردان شینه الروذوندی, مردانشینه, مردان سینه	NH: 353, 356, 358–9, 379, 388, 391–3	مردان شینه الروندشتی
<i>Mardān-Šāh</i> , Bahrām Čübīn's general	مردان شاه	BL II: 772–4, 776, 783, 798, 804–5, 1012–3	مردانشاه
<i>Maryam</i> , daughter of Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines		DN: 96; MQ III: 170; ṬB: 668, 671; NH: 372, 375, 381; BKh: 102; MJ: 78, 136	مریم
<i>Maryam</i> , daughter of Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines, who is married to Khusraw II	ابنة موريق	ṬB I: 994, 999	مریم
<i>Maryam</i> , daughter of Maurice, king of the Byzantines	ابنة الملك موريق	AT: 367	مریم
<i>Maryam</i> , daughter of Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	دختر ملك الروم, دختر خویش, پسر و دختر ملك الروم	BL II: 793–5, 802, 838	مریم
<i>Maryam</i> , daughter of Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	دخت قيصر	FD VIII: 146, 160, 161	مریم
<i>Maḡātūra</i> , friend of Khāqān IV		FD VIII: 170, 172–5, 177	مغاتوره
<i>Malik al-turk</i> , Khāqān IV		AT: 368	ملك الترك
<i>Malik al-Khazar</i> , king of the Khazars		YQ: 188; ṬB I: 991; AT: 364	ملك الخزر
<i>Malik al-Khazar</i> , king of the Khazars	صاحب الخزر	DN: 81	ملك الخزر
<i>Malik al-Rūm Mawrīqīs</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines		MQ III: 170	ملك الروم موريقيس
<i>Malik al-Fars</i> , father of Hurmuzd IV		YQ: 188	ملك الفرس
<i>Malik min mulūk al-khazar</i> , a king of the Khazars		MS I: 312	ملك من ملوك الخزر
<i>Malik al-Rūm</i> , Emperor of the Byzantines	قيصر روم	BKh: 100, 102	ملك الروم
<i>Malik-i khazarān</i> , king of the Khazars		BL II: 760	ملك خزران
<i>Munajjam</i> , Hurmuzd IV's astrologer		BL II: 765, 767	منجم

<i>Manūčīhr</i> , first of the legendary kings who ruled Iran		FD VIII: 33, 37	منوچهر
<i>Manūšīhr</i> , Manūčīhr, first of the legendary kings who ruled Iran		DN: 92; ȚB I: 992, 997	منوشهر
<i>Manūšīhr</i> , Manūčīhr, first of the legendary kings who ruled Iran	منوشهر ملك	NH: 367	منوشهر
<i>Mīhrān-Sitād</i> , a companion of Bihzād and Khusraw I's official		YQ: 188	مهران ستاد
<i>Mīhrān-Sitād</i> , merchant from Khurrah-yi Ardašīr		FD VIII: 30, 78	مهران ستاد
<i>Mīhrān-Sitād</i> , a man	مهران شنان	MJ: 75–7	مهران ستاد
<i>Mīhrān-Sitād</i> , father of Nastūh and Khusraw I's official	مهران ستاد	FD VII: 493–4, 498–9; FD VIII: 30	مهران شتاد
<i>Mīhrān-Sitād</i> , Khusraw I's official	مهر استاد	BL II: 764–6	مهر انستاد
<i>Mīhr-Bastān</i> , father of Anūšjān and Khusraw I's official	الشيخ من العلم, شيخ كبير	NH: 351–2	مهر بستان
<i>Mawbad-i mawbadān</i> , chief of the magi		MJ: 76	مويد موبدان
<i>Mawbadān-i mawbad</i> , chief of the magi	موبدان, مويد	BL II: 760, 766, 768, 774, 777–9, 1011	موبدان مويد
<i>Mawbadh</i> , magi, chief of the magi		GD: 98	مويذ
<i>Mawbadhān mawbadh</i> , chief of the magi		YQ: 188	موبدان مويذ
<i>Mūčīl al-Armanī</i> , John Mystacon (d. 591) army general from Armenia		BL II: 797	موچيل الارمني
<i>Mawrīq</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	قيصر, ملك الروم	ȚB I: 991, 994, 998–1001	موريق
<i>Mawrīq</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	ملك الروم	ȚB: 665–6, 668, 671	موريق
<i>Mawrīq</i> , Maurice, king of the Byzantines	ملك الروم	AT: 364, 367	موريق
<i>Mawrīq malik al-Rūm</i> , Maurice Emperor of the Byzantines	ملك الروم, صاحب الروم, موريق ملك الروم	YQ: 191, 193	موريق
<i>Mawrīq</i> , Maurice, Emperor of the Byzantines	ملك روم	MJ: 78	موريق
<i>Mūsīl</i> , John Mystacon, an army leader from whom Bišām and Bindūy ask help in Azerbaijan		ȚB I: 1000	موسيل
<i>Mūsīl al-Armanī</i> , John Mystacon, an army leader from Armenia		DN: 94–6	موسيل الأرمني

<i>Mūšīl Armanī</i> , John Mystacon, an army leader from Armenia		MJ: 78	موشيل ارمنى
<i>Mūšīl al-Armaniyy</i> , John Mystacon, an army leader from Armenia	موشيل الارمنى, موشيل	NH: 370, 375–7	موشيل الأرمني
<i>Mūšīl</i> , John Mystacon, an army leader from Armenia		FD VIII: 73–4, 136, 139	موشيل
<i>Mīlād</i> , name of a champion		FD VIII: 29	ميلاد
<i>al-Nabiyy</i> , the Prophet, Muhammad		MS I: 317	النبي
<i>Al-Nakhārjān</i> , Khusraw II's general		DN: 90, 108	النخارجان
<i>al-Nakhkhārjān</i> , Khusraw II's general	ثلاثة من اصحابه, القواد الثلاثة	NH: 365, 393–4	النخارجان
<i>Nastūd</i> , a man		FD VIII: 151, 154–5	نستود
<i>Nastūh</i> , son of Mihrān-Šitād		FD VII: 493	نستوه
<i>Naṭrā</i> (?), brother of Khāqān IV	اخو خاقان	YQ: 194	نطرا
<i>Naṭrā</i> (?), brother of Khāqān IV	نطرا التركي	TB I: 1001	نطرا
<i>al-Nu'mān</i> , Nu'mān b. al-Mundhir, last Lakhmid king		MS I: 314	النعمان
<i>Nu'mān b. Mundhir</i> , last Lakhmid king	نعمان بن منذر	BL II: 785, 839	نعمان
<i>al-Nu'mān b. al-Mundhir</i> , last Lakhmid king	النعمان, المنذر بن	NH: 366–7	النعمان ابن المنذر
<i>Nu'mān b. al-Mundhir</i> , last Lakhmid king		MQ III: 169	نعمان بن المنذر
<i>Nawdhar</i> , son of Manūčīhr		FD VIII: 37, 64	نوذر
<i>Nūšīn-Rawān</i> , father of Hurmuz IV	شاه ايرانيان	FD VII: 488, 496–7, 543, 604; FD VIII: 147, 164	نوشين روان
<i>Nīātūs</i> , brother of Maurice, king of the Byzantines		FD VIII: 131, 133, 142, 146, 159–163	نياطوس
<i>Hurmuz</i> , Hurmuz IV	هرمز بن أنوشروان بن قياذ	MS I: 312–3, 315–6	هرمز
<i>Hurmuz</i> , Hurmuz IV	هرمز بن كسرى, هرمز بن كسرى أنوشروان	TB I: 988–96, 998	هرمز
<i>Hurmuz</i> , a man sent by Khusraw II to Khāqān IV		TB I: 1001; TB: 642–4, 648–9, 653–62, 666, 670, 677–80	هرمز
<i>Hurmuz</i> , Hurmuz IV	هرمزد بن انوشروان, هرمزد	BL II: 758–64, 766–9, 771–5, 777–86, 788–9, 794, 798–9, 835, 1010–4	هرمز
<i>Hurmuz</i> , Hurmuz IV	شهريار, ايران شاه, شاه ايران	FD VII: 488–9, 494, 497, 499–500,	هرمز

		508–9, 513, 517, 525, 544, 562, 573, 580, 587, 592, 604–5, 611–13, 615, 625; FD VIII: 7, 18, 22, 24–5, 36, 48, 50–1, 163, 193	
<i>Hurmuz, Hurmuzd IV</i>	كسرى هرمز بن انوشروان	BKh: 98–100	هرمز
<i>Hurmuz, Hurmuzd IV</i>	هرمز بن نوشروان	GD: 98–100	هرمز
<i>Hurmuz, Hurmuzd IV</i>	هرمز بن كسرى	AT: 364–7	هرمز
<i>Hurmuz b. Anūšīrwān, Hurmuzd IV</i>	هرمز بن انوشروان	YQ: 187–91	هرمز
<i>Hurmuz b. Kīsrā, Hurmuzd IV</i>	ملك هرمز	MQ III: 169	هرمز بن كسرى
<i>Hurmuz b. Kīsrā, Hurmuzd IV</i>	هرمز	QT: 664	هرمز بن كسرى
<i>Hurmuz-Jarābzīn, a man sent by Khusraw II to Khāqān IV</i>		YQ: 188	هرمز جرابزين
<i>Hurmuz-Jarābzīn, a man sent by Khusraw II to Khāqān IV</i>		TB: 676	هرمز جرابزين
<i>Hurmuz Khurrād-Burzīn, an official of Hurmuzd IV</i>		BL II: 769, 776, 784	هرمز خراد برزين
<i>Hurmuzd, Hurmuzd IV</i>	هرمزد بن نوشروان	MJ: 76–7, 96	هرمزد
<i>Hurmuzd, Hurmuzd IV</i>	الملك, هرمزد بن كسرى انوشروان, الملك, ابن التركية, ابن هذه الجارية	NH: 350, 352–5, 359–68, 371, 380, 387, 390	هرمزد
<i>Hurmuzd b. Kīsrā, Hurmuzd IV</i>	ابها الملك, الملك, الملك, هرمزد, ابن التركية	DN: 81–9, 91, 93, 99, 103, 105, 106	هرمزد بن كسرى
<i>Hurmuzd-Jarābzīn, an official in the service of Hurmuzd IV, a man sent by Khusraw II to Khāqān IV</i>	رسول الملك, هرمزد جرابزين	DN: 83, 86, 90, 102–3, 108	هرمزد جرابزين
<i>Hurmuzd-Jarābzīn, general in Bahrām Čūbīn's army, a man sent by Khusraw II to Khāqān IV</i>	جرابزين, الرجل العدو, ثلاثة من اصحابه, القواد الثلاثة	NH: 355–6, 360, 365, 373–4, 386–7, 389, 393–4	هرمزد جرابزين
<i>Hišām b. Muḥammad, Hišām b. Muḥammad Ibn Kalbī</i>		TB I: 988, 991, 994	هشام بن محمد
<i>Hamadān-Gušasp, one of Bahrām Čūbīn's generals</i>	بزرگان لشكر	FD VII: 594, 599–600; FD VIII: 12	همدان گشسپ
<i>Hawdhah b. 'Alī al-Ḥanafī, a noble Arab through whom Hurmuzd IV sends food and supplies to the army</i>	از بنى حنيفة, از ملكرادگان بحرين و يمامه, هوذه ذو التاج, ملك نيست وليكن رئيس	BL II: 761–2	هوذه بن على الحنفى
<i>Wālida, Hurmuzd IV's mother</i>	الجارية	NH: 351–2	والدة

<i>al-wujūh al-ṭalāṭa</i> , the three prominent men		MS I: 312	الوجوه الثلاثة
<i>Waraqā b. Nawfal</i> , a poet		MS I: 316	ورقة بن نوفل
<i>al-Wazīr</i> , Hurmuzd IV's vizier	وزيره	AT: 366	الوزير
<i>Wahriz</i> , a man who is sent to the king of Yemen by Khusraw I		BL II: 761	وهرز
<i>.fāris</i> (?), a brother of Khāqān IV	أخو خاقان	YQ: 193	نفارس
<i>Yartaḡin</i> , Khāqān III, cousin of Hurmuzd IV	يرتغين بن شاهانشاه, يرتغين شاه, ابن خاله, ابن الملك	NH: 352, 357–9	يرتغين
<i>Yazdān-Jušnas</i> , head of Hurmuzd IV's viziers	رئيس الوزراء, يزدان وزير, يزدان	DN: 85–7	يزدان جشنس
<i>Yazdān-Farrūkh b. Abarkān</i> , general in Bahrām Čübīn's army	زادانفروخ بن ابركان	NH: 352–3, 391	يزدان فروخ بن ابركان
<i>Yazdān-Jušnas</i> , Hurmuzd IV's vizier	يزدانجشنس, يزدادجشنس, يزدانجشيس	NH: 359, 361–3	يزدانجشنس
<i>Yazd-Jušnas b. al-Ḥalabān</i> , a general of Bahrām Čübīn		DN: 89	يزدجشنس بن الحلبان
<i>Yazd-Jušnaš</i> , Bahrām Čübīn's general	يزدجشنس	NH: 356, 360, 379, 393	يزدجشنس
<i>Yazdak</i> , scribe		DN: 86	يزدك
<i>Yazdak</i> , scribe in Bahrām Čübīn's army	يزدك الكاتب, مزدك الكاتب	NH: 356, 360, 365, 373, 382	يزدك
<i>Yaltakīn</i> , Khāqān III	يرتكين, يرتقين	DN: 84	يلتكين
<i>Yabḡū</i> , brother of Khāqān IV	ببغو	BL II: 804, 1015	يبغو
<i>Yazdān Bakhšiš</i> , Hurmuzd IV's vizier		BL II: 774–5, 779–81, 783, 1013–4	يزدان بخشش
<i>Yalān-Sīna</i> , general in Bahrām Čübīn's army	بزرگان لشکر	FD VII: 502, 532, 554, 558, 585–6, 589, 594, 598, 604–5; FD VIII: 12, 46, 129–30, 132–4, 140–3, 151, 169, 189, 204, 214, 217, 221–3	يلان سينه
<i>Yalān-Sīna</i> , possibly a general in Bahrām Čübīn's army		MJ: 96	يلان سينه

Chart of place names within the story of Bahrām Čübīn

Identification and explanation	Variations in written form	Original reference	Name
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<i>Ādhirbāijān</i> , Azerbaijan		QT: 664; YQ: 188, 190–2; DN: 81–2, 86, 88, 94–6; TB I: 993, 995–6, 999–1000; TB: 660–1, 668, 669; NH: 350–1, 361, 363, 370, 375–6, 382; BKh: 99, 102; AṬ: 365–7	آذربایجان
<i>Ādhirbayjān</i> , Azerbaijan	بلاد آذربایجان	MS I: 313, 317	آذربایجان
<i>Ādhirbāikān</i> , Azerbaijan		MJ: 77–8	آذربایکان
<i>Ādhirbāygān</i> , Azerbaijan		BL II: 760–1, 778, 781, 835, 789–90, 795, 1013–4	آذربایگان
<i>Āmid</i> , Amida		DN: 81; NH: 350	آمد
<i>Āmul</i> , a city		FD VIII: 220, 224	امل
<i>Āmūy</i> , a city near the Oxus River		FD VIII: 218–9, 221	اموی
<i>Āwāzah</i> , Parmūda's fortress	دژ آوازہ, دژ, حصار	FD VII: 551, 557–9, 565, 571–2	آوازہ
<i>Anṭākiyya</i> , Antioch		TB I: 994, 999; NH: 373; AṬ: 367	أنطاكية
<i>Ardabīl</i> , a city		FD VII: 489, 498–9, 627; FD VIII: 42, 72	اردبیل
<i>Arḍ al-Turk</i> , land of the Turanians	بلاد الترك	MS I: 318	ارض الترك
<i>Arḍ al-Jabal</i> , al-Jabal		DN: 107	ارض الجبل
<i>Arḍ al-Rūm</i> , Byzantine Empire		DN: 94	ارض الروم
<i>Arḍ Fāris</i> , Persia		NH: 350, 356, 396	ارض فارس
<i>Armaniyya</i> , Armenia		DN: 81–2, 96; TB I: 995; MS I: 313; NH: 352	ارمنیة
<i>Arminiyya</i> , Armenia		BL II: 760–1, 763, 766; FD VII: 489, 493, 627	ارمینیه
<i>Ašbahān</i> , Esfahan		TB I: 1000; AṬ: 367	اصبهان
<i>Amrī</i> , a city	مدينة امری	NH: 386	امری
<i>Andiyūšahr</i> , name of a city		FD VIII: 164	اندیوشهر
<i>Anṭākiyyah</i> , Antioch		BL II: 793; BKh: 102	انطاکیه
<i>al-Ahwāz</i> , Ahvaz		DN: 83; NH: 355	الاهواز
<i>Ahwāz</i> , Ahvaz		BL II: 760, 768; FD VII: 503	اهواز
<i>Īrānšahr</i> , old name for Nayšapour		DN: 83; TB: 642, 645, 649, 654, 659, 671, 676, 678, 680, 686; NH: 350, 392	ایران شهر

<i>Īrān</i> , Iran		FD VII: 490, 492, 496, 500–1, 507, 527, 532, 535–6, 540, 544–5, 553, 555, 559, 579, 583, 585, 595, 597, 602–5, 608, 614, 623, 625–7; FD VIII: 22, 28–30, 33, 37, 49, 61, 63–4, 68–9, 75, 129, 132, 133, 139–40, 146, 178, 183–4, 186–90, 192, 194, 197, 202, 205, 211–2, 214, 218, 223, 233, 238–9; GD: 98, 100; MJ: 76	ایران
<i>Bādgīs</i> , a district in Khorasan	بدغیس	MS I: 312	بادغیس
<i>Bādgīs</i> , a district in Khorasan		BL II: 760; BKh: 98	بادغیس
<i>Bādiya-yi ‘arab</i> , Arabian desert		BL II: 760	بادیه عرب
<i>Bādhgīs</i> , a district in Khorasan		TB I: 992; AT: 364	بادغیس
<i>al-Babr</i> , a region or a city		DN: 107	البر
<i>Baḥrayn</i> , Bahrain		BL II: 761–2	بحرین
<i>Bukhārā</i> , Bukhara	مفازة بخارا	NH: 387	بخارا
<i>Barda’</i> , a city		FD VII: 498–9, 627; FD VIII: 37, 42	بردع
<i>Barzah</i> , a fortress	الحصن	NH: 358	برزه
<i>Barak</i> , a river	رود برک	FD VII: 550	برک
<i>Baḡdād</i> , Baghdad		FD VII: 518, 611, 626–7	بغداد
<i>Bilād al-Turk</i> , land of the Turanians	ارض الترك	DN: 99, 102; NH: 380–1, 386	بلاد الترك
<i>Bilād al-Turk</i> , land of the Turanians		TB: 679	بلاد الترك
<i>Bilād al-Rūm</i> , land of the Byzantines	الروم	AT: 364, 367	بلاد الروم
<i>Bilād al-Fars</i> , Persia		YQ: 194; TB I: 991	بلاد الفرس
<i>Bilād-i turk</i> , land of the Turanians		BKh: 99	بلاد ترک
<i>Bilād Khurāsān</i> , Khorasan		YQ: 188	بلاد خراسان
<i>Balkh</i> , Balkh	مدینة بلخ	DN: 84; MS I: 313	بلخ
<i>Balkh</i> , Balkh		BL II: 760, 766, 768, 771, 777; FD VII: 491, 552, 579, 589, 592, 609; TB: 642	بلخ

<i>Balkh</i> , Balkh	ارض بلخ	NH: 350, 352, 355, 357–8	بلخ
<i>Balad al-Dīlam</i> , land of the Dailamites	بلاد الديلم	DN: 104–5, 110	بلد الديلم
<i>Banān</i> (?), a city		NH: 358	بنان
<i>Bahrām tall</i> , hill of Bahrām		FD VII: 557	بهرام تل
<i>Būšanj</i> , a city or village in Khorasan		MS I: 312	بوشنج
<i>Baykand</i> , a city built by Jamšid		TB: 648, 653	بيكند
<i>al-Baylaqān</i> , a region or a city		MS I: 314	البيلقان
<i>Bīstūn</i> , a mountain in Persia		FD VIII: 19	بيستون
<i>Pārs</i> , Persia		FD VII: 503; FD VIII: 29; BKh: 102	پارس
<i>Pul-i Nahrawān</i> , bridge of the Nahravan River		FD VIII: 38, 45–7	پل نهروان
<i>al-Turk</i> , land of the Turanians	بلاد الترك	YQ: 188, 193, 195; TB I: 991–3, 1000–1	الترك
<i>al-Turk</i> , land of the Turanians		MQ III: 169	الترك
<i>Turk</i> , land of the Turanians		FD VII: 553; FD VIII: 179, 197	ترك
<i>Turkistān</i> , land of the Turanians	ملكت تركستان, ترك	BL II: 760–1, 765, 771, 773, 795, 800, 804, 1013	تركستان
<i>Turkistān</i> , land of the Turanians		GD: 98, 100; BKh: 102; MJ: 78	تركستان
<i>al-Tirmidh</i> , Termez		DN: 84	الترمذ
<i>Tirmidh</i> , Termez		NH: 350, 358	ترمذ
<i>Tūrān</i> , land of the Turanians	توران زمین	FD VII: 533, 545–6; FD VIII: 64, 186, 206, 212–3	توران
<i>Ṭanbūs</i> (?), a city or a region		GD: 98	ثنبوس
<i>al-Jabal</i> , a region		TB I: 999–1000; MS I: 314; NH: 368, 393	الجبل
<i>al-Jabal</i> , a region	أرض الجبل, رأس هذا الجبل	NH: 350–1, 367, 389, 394	الجبل
<i>Jabal al-Qabkh</i> , a mountain or a region		MS I: 312	جبل القبيخ
<i>Jurjān</i> , Gorgan		DN: 99, 102, 105; BL II: 763, 799	جرجان
<i>Jurjān</i> , Gorgan	جرجان على ساحل البحر	NH: 382, 389–90	جرجان
<i>al-Jazīra</i> , Northwest Mesopotamia		MS I: 312; NH: 350	الجزيرة

<i>Jalūlā</i> , a plain on which Bahrām and Khusraw II fight		NH: 365	جلولا
<i>Dašt-i Jalūlā</i> , a plain on which Bahrām and Khusraw II fight	دشت جلولا	BL II: 783	جلولا
<i>Jamāl</i> , a region		BL II: 763	جمال
<i>Jayhūn</i> , Oxus or Amu Darya River that flows into the Aral Sea	شاطئ النهر	DN: 105	جيحون
<i>Jayhūn</i> , Oxus or Amu Darya River that flows into the Aral Sea		ṬB: 650, 678, 686	جيحون
<i>Jīlān</i> , Gilan		DN: 107; NH: 355	جیلان
<i>Jayhūn</i> , Oxus or Amu Darya River that flows into the Aral Sea		BL II: 760, 800	جيحون
<i>Jayhūn</i> , Amu Darya or Oxus, a river that flows into the Aral Sea	رود جيحون	FD VII: 491, 497, 547, 551, 610; FD VIII: 190–1	جيحون
<i>Čāj</i> , a city	شهر چاج	FD VIII: 165	چاج
<i>Čīn</i> , China, in Firdawsī refers to the land of the Turanians		FD VII: 494, 608; FD VIII: 28, 30, 177, 178–80, 183–4, 188–90, 194, 197, 206, 208, 212, 214, 218, 221	چین
<i>al-Ḥiṣn</i> , Barmūdha's fortress		YQ: 189; ṬB: 654, 655	الحصن
<i>Ḥiṣn māsafrī</i> , a fortress		DN: 82	حصن ماسفري
<i>Ḥulwān</i> , a region or a place		DN: 107; BL II: 783; NH: 390, 392	حلوان
<i>al-Ḥīra</i> , name of a place		NH: 366	الحيرة
<i>Khuttalān</i> , a city in Transoxania		BL II: 768	ختلان
<i>Khurāsān</i> , Khorasan	ارض خراسان	DN: 83–4, 99, 102; MS I: 312, 317–8	خراسان
<i>Khurāsān</i> , Khorasan		ṬB I: 1000; MQ III: 169; FD VII: 490, 531, 609; FD VIII: 61–4, 219–20; ṬB: 658, 669–70, 674; BKh: 98, 102–3; MJ: 76; AṬ: 367	خراسان
<i>Khurāsān</i> , Khorasan	خراسان	BL II: 760, 783, 798–800, 803, 805	خراسان
<i>Khurāsān</i> , Khorasan	أرض خراسان، خراسان	NH: 350, 355, 357, 379–80, 382, 386, 390–91	خراسان

<i>Khurrah-yi Ardašir</i> , a district in the Persian empire		FD VIII: 78–9	خره ی اردشیر
<i>al-Khazar</i> , land of the Khazars		MS I: 312; MQ III: 169; NH: 350–1	الخزر
<i>Khazar</i> , land of the Khazars		FD VII: 489–90, 492–3; GD: 98; MJ: 76	خزر
<i>Khazrān</i> , land of the Khazars	خَزَر	BL II: 760, 761–2, 1011	خَزَران
<i>Khwārazm</i> , Khorasmia		DN: 99, 105; NH: 380, 389	خوارزم
<i>Dār al-malik</i> , royal palace		AT: 367	دار الملك
<i>Dārā</i> , a city in Mesopotamia		DN: 81	دارا
<i>Dāmaḡān</i> , metropolis in the Qūms province		BL II: 799	دامغان
<i>Dubba Mamsiyā</i> (?), a desert	صحراء دبة ممسيا	NH: 356	دبة ممسيا
<i>Dijla</i> , Tigris		MS I: 315; AT: 365	دجلة
<i>Diz-i Rūyīn</i> , brazen hold, brazen fortress		BL II: 767	دز روین
<i>al-Dastabī</i> (?), a city or a region		DN: 107	الدستبي
<i>Dašbatī</i> (?), a city or a region		NH: 393	دشيتي
<i>Dašt-i Tāzān</i> , name of a desert		FD VIII: 121	دشت تازان
<i>Dašt-i Dūk</i> , name of a desert		FD VIII: 121, 124	دشت دوک
<i>Dašt-i Harī</i> , desert, plain of Herat		FD VII: 515, 520, 523	دشت هری
<i>Danaq</i> , a plain somewhere in Azerbaijan	صحراء الدنق	TB I: 1000	دنق
<i>al-Dayr</i> , a monastery		TB I: 999	الدير
<i>Dayr</i> , a monastery	دير راهب, الدير, الصومعة, دير الرهبان	NH: 367–8, 371, 393	دير
<i>Dayr</i> , a monastery	الدير	AT: 367	دير
<i>Dayr li-l-Naṣārā</i> , a Christian monastery	الدير	TB: 666–7	دير للنصارى
<i>al-Daylam</i> , land of Daylamites		MS I: 318	الديلم
<i>al-Daylam</i> , land of Daylamites	ارض الديلم	NH: 389–92, 395	الديلم
<i>al-Dīnawar</i> , a region or a city		MS I: 314	الدينور
<i>Dīnawar</i> , a region or a city		BL II: 758	دينور
<i>Dayr</i> , a monastery		BKh: 101	دير
<i>al-Rān</i> , a region or a city		MS I: 314	الران
<i>Rustāq Šarāhīn</i> (?), a city or a village		NH: 394	رستاق شراهين
<i>al-Raqqā</i> , city of Raqqa	مدينة الرقة	NH: 372	الرقة
<i>Raqqah</i> , city on the banks of the Euphrates		BL II: 792	الرقة

<i>al-Ruhā</i> , Edessa		YQ: 191; MS I: 316; NH: 372	الرها
<i>al-Rūm</i> , Byzantium		QT: 664; MQ III: 169; TB: 665, 673	الروم
<i>al-Rūm</i> , Byzantium	بلاد الروم	TB I: 991–2, 994, 1001	الروم
<i>al-Rūm</i> , Byzantium	ارض الروم، بلاد الروم	NH: 350, 366, 370–3, 375–8, 380, 382, 387	روم
<i>Rūm</i> , Byzantium	مملكة روم	BL II: 760, 786, 793–4, 796, 799, 834–5, 839, 1014	روم
<i>Rūm</i> , Byzantium		FD VII: 488, 525, 595; FD VIII: 48, 57–8, 64, 68–9, 74, 126, 133, 188; GD: 100; BKh: 98; MJ: 76	روم
<i>Rūmšahr</i> , a Byzantine city		FD VII: 492	روم شهر
<i>Rūyīn dīz</i> , brazen hold, brazen fortress		FD VII: 607	رویین دز
<i>al-Rayy</i> , city of Ray		YQ: 188, 190, 195	الري
<i>al-Rayy</i> , city of Ray	مدينة الري	DN: 86–8	الري
<i>Rayy</i> , city of Ray	أهل الري	TB I: 992	الري
<i>al-Rayy</i> , city of Ray	بلاد الري	NH: 361, 363–5, 382, 390–1, 393	الري
<i>al-Rayy</i> , city of Ray		TB: 660	الري
<i>Rayy</i> , city of Ray		BL II: 762–3, 777–80, 799, 803, 1011; FD VII: 583, 599, 606–7, 609, 611; FD VIII: 26–7, 29, 205, 233–9; MJ: 77	ری
<i>Zāb</i> , a river in modern Kirkuk		DN: 92	زاب
<i>Sābāt</i> , a city near Ctesiphon		TB I: 990	ساباط
<i>Sābāt</i> , a city near Ctesiphon	ساباط المدائن	AT: 364	ساباط
<i>Sārī</i> , a city in Māzanderān near Āmul		FD VII: 602; FD VIII: 220	ساری
<i>Sijistān</i> , a city or a region	بلاد سجستان	NH: 357, 382	سجستان
<i>Sanjās</i> , a city or a region		NH: 393	سنجاس
<i>al-Sawād</i> , a region		DN: 81; AT: 364	السواد
<i>al-Sawād</i> , a region	اهل السواد	TB I: 991	السواد
<i>Sūristān</i>		FD VIII: 164	سورستان
<i>Sīrāf</i> , city of Siraf		FD VII: 613	سيراف
<i>Šāṭī' al-nahr al-'a'ẓam</i> , river banks of a great river		DN: 84	شاطئ النهر الأعظم

<i>al-Šām</i> , Syrian region		MS I: 317	الشام
<i>Šām</i> , Syrian region		BL II: 760, 785–6	شام
<i>Šām</i> , Syrian region	ارض الشام	NH: 350, 372, 391	شام
<i>Šarrāh</i> (?), a village		DN: 108	شراه
<i>Šahr-i turkān</i> , city of the Turanians		FD VII: 561; FD VIII: 168	شهر ترکان
<i>Šahr-i Šīz</i> , a city near the Azerbaijan border		BL II: 795	شهر شیز
<i>Šahr-i Kašān</i> , Kashan		FD VIII: 200	شهر کاشان
<i>al-Šīz</i> , a city near the Azerbaijan border	مدينة الشيز	NH: 370, 375–6	الشيز
<i>Šīrāz</i> , Shiraz		FD VII: 614	شیراز
<i>Šawma'a</i> , monastery		NH: 372	صومعة
<i>al-Šaymara</i> , a city situated between Khuzistān and Bilād Jabal		DN: 107; NH: 392	الصيمرة
<i>Tāliqān</i> , a city between Balkh and Marv		BL II: 760	طالقان
<i>Tabaristān</i> , a region in northern Iran near the Caspian Sea		DN: 102, 105; BL II: 763, 803; AṬ: 368	طبرستان
<i>Tabaristān</i> , ancient Hyrcania, a region in northern Iran near the Caspian Sea	طبرستان على ساحل البحر	NH: 380, 382, 389–90, 392	طبرستان
<i>al-Ṭabsīn</i> (?), a city or a region		NH: 355	الطيسين
<i>Ṭabsīn</i> (?), a city or a region		BL II: 768	طيسين
<i>al-Ṭarīq al-a'ẓam</i> , the great road		NH: 392	الطريق الاعظم
<i>Ṭisbūn</i> , Ctesiphon	مدائن	ṬB I: 994	طيسبون
<i>al-Ṭaylasān</i> , a region somewhere in the land of the Dailamites		DN: 107	الطيلسان
<i>Ṭisfūn</i> , Ctesiphon		FD VII: 508, 510, 525, 609–10, 613, 620, 623; FD VIII: 47, 63	طيسفون
<i>al-'Irāq</i> , Iraq		QT: 664; DN: 84, 107; NH: 361, 364, 389, 392–3	العراق
<i>'Irāq</i> , Iraq	العراق	BL II: 758, 768, 786	عراق
<i>'Irāq</i> , Iraq		BKh: 102	عراق
<i>'Arab</i> , the land of the Arabs		BL II: 761; MJ: 76	عرب
<i>'Umān</i> , Oman		FD VII: 613	عمان
<i>'Amrān</i> , a place in Arabia		NH: 372	عمران
<i>Fārs</i> , Persia, a province		ṬB I: 1000; AṬ: 367	فارس
<i>al-Furāt</i> , the Euphrates River	شاطئ الفرات	DN: 95	الفرات

<i>al-Furāt</i> , the Euphrates River		ṬB I: 991, 998; ṬB: 666; NH: 371; AṬ: 367	الفرات
<i>Furāt</i> , the Euphrates River		BL: 791; FD VIII: 75; BKh: 100	فرات
<i>Qarmāsīn</i> (?), a region		MS I: 314	قرماسين
<i>Qazwīn</i> , Qazvin	مدينة قزوین	NH: 395	قزوین
<i>al-Qusṭanṭaniyya</i> , Constantinople, Istanbul		NH: 373	القسطنطنیة
<i>Qusṭanṭīniyya</i> , Constantinople		BL II: 794	قسطنطينیه
<i>Qaṣr</i> , Khusraw II's palace		MS I: 318	قصر
<i>Qalūṣ</i> (?), a village somewhere near Ray		DN: 108	قلوص
<i>Qanṭara Jūdharz</i> , bridge of Jūdharz		DN: 90	قنطرة جودرز
<i>Qanṭara Kārsūn</i> , Kārsūn bridge		NH: 366	قنطرة کارسون
<i>Qūhistān</i> , southern part of Khorasan		BL II: 768	قهبستان
<i>Qūmis</i> , a region between Iraq and Khorasan	ارض قومس، مدينة قومس	DN: 99, 102, 106	قومس
<i>Qūmis</i> , a region between Iraq and Khorasan	ارض قومس، قومس متياسرا	NH: 380, 391	قومس
<i>Qūmiš</i> , a region between Iraq and Khorasan		BL II: 799	قومش
<i>Kūfa</i> , city of Kufa		MS I: 314	کوفة
<i>Kirmān</i> , Kerman		FD VII: 614	کرمان
<i>Gurgān</i> , Gorgan		FD VIII: 220	گرگان
<i>Mā warā' al-nahr</i> , Transoxiana		ṬB: 674	ما وراء النهر
<i>Māsbadān</i> (?), a city or a region		NH: 392	ماسبدان
<i>Māsbadhān</i> (?), a city or a region		DN: 107	ماسبدان
<i>Māfāriqayn</i> , Silvan or Martyropolis		NH: 350	مافارقین
<i>al-Māh</i> , a city or a region		DN: 81	الماء
<i>al-Māh</i> , a city or a region	الماهین	NH: 390, 392, 394	الماء
<i>Māh</i> , a city or a region		ṬB I: 989	ماه
<i>al-Madā'in</i> , Ctesiphon		DN: 81, 84, 86, 88, 90–1, 94, 107, 110	المدائن
<i>al-Madā'in</i> , Ctesiphon		MS I: 315–6; NH: 350, 359–60, 363, 366, 368, 370–1, 375, 382, 391, 395–6; AṬ: 365–7	المدائن
<i>Madā'in</i> , Ctesiphon	المدائن	ṬB I: 990, 993, 995, 998–1000	مدائن

<i>al-Madā'in</i> , Ctesiphon		ṬB: 661, 669–70, 673	مدائن
<i>Madāyin</i> , Ctesiphon		BL II: 760, 773, 777–8, 780–1, 783–6, 790–1, 795, 798, 803, 805, 1013–5; GD: 99, 100; BKh: 99, 102; MJ: 77–8	مداین
<i>al-Madīna</i> , capital of the land of the Turanians	مدينة الملك	NH: 381, 383, 387	المدينة
<i>al-Madīna al-'atiqa</i> , ancient city		NH: 366	المدينة العتيقة
<i>Madīna Hurmuz</i> , city of Hurmuzd IV		YQ: 190	مدينة هرمز
<i>Marw</i> , Marv		FD VII: 488, 617; FD VIII: 200, 210–1, 215, 221	مرو
<i>Marw al-Šāhijān</i> , a city		NH: 391	مرو الشاهجان
<i>Marw rūd</i> , river of Marv		FD VII: 488	مرورود
<i>Miṣr</i> , Maṣr, Egypt		MS I: 317; FD VIII: 76	مصر
<i>Mayyāfāriqīn</i> , Silvan or Martyropolis		DN: 81	ميافارقين
<i>Nārwan</i> , a forest in which Gurdiyah hides		FD VIII: 220, 227	نارون
<i>Nuṣaybīn</i> , Nusaybin, a city in modern Turkey		DN: 81; BL II: 760; NH: 350	نصيبين
<i>Nahāwand</i> , a city in Hamadan province		BL II: 758	نهاوند
<i>al-Nahr al-'A'zam</i> , the great river		NH: 350, 358, 380, 386, 390	النهر الأعظم
<i>al-Nahravān</i> , a river, tributary of the Tigris		YQ: 191; DN: 89; MS I: 314, 316; MQ III: 169; ṬB: 663; AṬ: 367	النهروان
<i>Nahrawān</i> , a river, tributary of the Tigris	أب نهروان	BKh: 100	نهروان
<i>Nahrawān</i> , a river, tributary of the Tigris		ṬB I: 993, 997; FD VIII: 8, 11–12, 14, 49; MJ: 77	نهروان
<i>Naysabūr</i> , Nayšapour		ṬB: 674	نيسبور
<i>Hāmāwarān</i> , Syria		FD VII: 504, 602	هاماوران
<i>Harāt</i> , Herat		YQ: 188; DN: 81, 83; MS I: 312; ṬB II: 174; AṬ: 364	هراة
<i>Harāt</i> , Herat	أرض الهراة	NH: 355	هراة

<i>Harāt</i> , Herat	هرات، هرا	BL II: 760, 768, 769	هراة
<i>Hurmuzd khurra</i> , a district in the Persian empire		NH: 350	هرمزد خره
<i>Harī</i> , Herat		FD VII: 488, 514–6, 522, 546	هری
<i>Hamadān</i> , Hamadan		BL II: 779, 798; FD VII: 618	همدان
<i>Hamadān</i> , Hamadan	ارض همدان	NH: 362, 392–4	همدان
<i>Hamadhān</i> , Hamadan		DN: 87, 108	همذان
<i>Hindūstān</i> , India		BL II: 836; FD VIII: 169; GD: 100	هندوستان
<i>Hīt</i> , city in al-Anbar province in Iraq	مدينة هيت	DN: 91	هيت
<i>Haytāl</i> , a region		FD VII: 550; FD VIII: 186	هيتال
<i>al-Wādī</i> , valley		NH: 367, 385	الوادي
<i>Warīg</i> , name of a place in Byzantium	راه وريغ	FD VIII: 118	وريغ
<i>al-Yarmūk</i> , Yarmouk River		DN: 95	اليرموك
<i>al-Yaman</i> , Yemen		MS I: 312	اليمن
<i>al-Yaman</i> , Yemen		MQ III: 169	اليمن
<i>Yamāma</i> , a region in southern Arabia		BL II: 761	يمامة
<i>Yaman</i> , Yemen		BL II: 761	يمن
<i>Yaman</i> , Yemen	شهر يمن	FD VII: 496	يمن

C. Events before the assassination of Bahrām Čübīn in Firdawsī's account

- Then Khusraw II sends an eloquent and strong counsellor named Khurrād-Burzīn with gifts such as jewels, swords and golden belts to the land of Turan to persuade Khāqān IV (FD VIII: 190). He uses his eloquence and gains Khāqān IV's confidence. He presents the gifts to Khāqān IV, who, in return, promises to grant every wish Khurrād-Burzīn may have (FD VIII: 193). Khurrād-Burzīn discusses the situation of Bahrām Čübīn. He states that Bahrām is treacherous, of wicked nature and his wrongdoings are worse than those of Ahriman (FD VIII: 193–4). Khāqān IV answers angrily that he is not the one who breaks the oath with his guest.
- Khurrād-Burzīn has to find another way and he approaches Khātūn II but she is not easy to communicate with. A chamberlain suggests that Khurrād-Burzīn could present himself as a doctor and in that way, get audience with Khātūn II. One of Khātūn II's daughters is ill and Khurrād-Burzīn could try to cure her (FD VIII: 196). The plan works out, Khurrād-Burzīn heals the daughter and gains Khātūn II's confidence. Khātūn II offers money for Khurrād-Burzīn's efforts but he refuses and says that he prefers instead a service in the future if needed (FD VIII: 196).
- For two months Khurrād-Burzīn witnesses the preparations for war against Iran. He becomes anxious and approaches a local man called Qulūn several times (FD VIII: 197). He asks the man to go to Bahrām Čübīn's place on the day of *Wahrām* because it is an ominous day and someone has predicted Bahrām's death on that day. For this reason, Bahrām avoids meeting people on that day. Khurrād-Burzīn has a plan to get Khāqān IV's royal seal which Qulūn could use and say that he is delivering a message from Khātūn II's daughter (FD VIII: 198).
- Qulūn should hide a knife in his sleeve, wait until there is no one in the room except Bahrām, pretend to deliver the message by whispering it in Bahrām's ear and strike with the knife (FD VIII: 198). Khurrād-Burzīn continues and says that the plan might lead to Qulūn's perdition but if he succeeds Khusraw II will certainly give him a city to rule. Qulūn says that he is already a hundred years old and expects nothing from the world. He is ready to sacrifice himself (FD VIII: 199).
- Khurrād-Burzīn hurries to Khātūn II and asks for a service. He wants Khāqān IV's royal seal. Khātūn II brings the seal and gives it to Khurrād-Burzīn (FD VIII: 199). Khurrād-Burzīn gives the seal to Qulūn. He executes the plan and kills Bahrām. Bahrām Čübīn's men arrest Qulūn, beat him severely but he reveals nothing (FD VIII: 200–201).

D. Biṣṭām and Bindūy in the corpus

	V/i (12)	V/j (10)	V/k (7)	V/aa (4)	VII/c (4)	VII/e (6)	VII/f (2)	VII/g (3)	VII/p (7)
QT (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
YQ (3)	YQ: 191	-	-	-	-	YQ: 195	-	-	YQ: 195
DN (9)	DN: 91	DN: 91–93	DN: 94–95	DN: 98	DN: 107	DN: 107	DN: 107–8	DN: 106	DN: 110
ṬB (3)	ṬB I: 998	ṬB I: 999	ṬB I: 999	-	-	-	-	-	-
MS (2)	MS I: 316	MS I: 316	-	-	-	-	-	-	MS I: 318
BL (7)	BL II: 786	BL II: 786–7, 791	BL II: 788	BL II: 798	BL II: 805	BL II: 805	-	-	BL II: 805
MQ (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD (8)	FD VIII: 51	FD VIII: 52–59	FD VIII: 68–71	FD VIII: 149–51	FD VIII: 220	FD VIII: 223	-	FD VIII: 222–3	FD VIII: 227–8
ṬB (3)	ṬB: 666	ṬB: 666–8	-	ṬB: 670	-	-	-	-	-
NH (9)	NH: 367	NH: 367–8	NH: 369	NH: 378	NH: 392	NH: 392	NH: 391–3	NH: 392	NH: 395
GD (1)	GD: 100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BKh (3)	BKh: 100	BKh: 101	BKh: 102	-	-	-	-	-	-
MJ (4)	MJ: 77	MJ: 77–8	-	-	-	MJ: 78	-	-	MJ: 79
AT (3)	AT: 367	AT: 367	AT: 367	-	-	-	-	-	-

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